

Crown Prince: Logic of war prevails

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Sunday that "the logic of war" still prevails and the war in the Gulf was still very much a matter for the generals. "However, if there is going to be a cessation of hostilities, it can only come by an appeal by the United Nations Security Council to both parties to cease hostilities," the Crown Prince told the Vancou television. The difficulty facing the Jordanian initiative and those of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organisation of Islamic Conference and the Union of Maghreb states has been that it is one side that is expected unilaterally to announce that it will withdraw from Kuwait and then to appeal for a ceasefire and allows the capitulation which, realistically speaking at the present moment, does not appear at all possible," he said.

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Iraq says missiles 'avenge Arab blood'

Baghdad threatens attacks on allied interests everywhere

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ SAID SUNDAY it fired missiles at Saudi Arabia and Israel "to avenge the Arab blood (spilled) in Iraq and Palestine" and to retaliate against allied air raids.

Iraq also said it would hit American and Western targets worldwide in retaliation for allied air attacks on its civilians.

"The interests of the United States everywhere in the world will also be the target. There is a difference between terrorism and struggle. This is a legitimate act," Baghdad Radio said.

"The target will not be confined this time to the soldiers of the United States, the mercenaries of its allies, or its collaborators in the holy lands in the Arabian Peninsula."

The radio said the United States and its allies "will pay dearly for their aggression against the Iraqi people and the institutions they built with their sweat and money."

An Iraqi spokesman said two missile strikes were launched against Israel and a number of Saudis were fired at the Saudi capital, Riyadh.

"Our heroic missile force dealt a destructive blow to the city of Riyadh, the den of treason, disgrace, infidelity and atheism with Al Hussein (modified Scud) missiles after midnight last night," he was quoted as saying by the radio.

"In response to the enemy attacks and to avenge the Arab blood in Iraq and Palestine, your heroic missile forces last night used Al Hussein missiles to deal a devastating blow to Tel Aviv..." he added.

Israel said it was hit by two Iraqi Scuds late Saturday and early Sunday. But the missiles missed Israeli cities and did not cause any casualties, it said.

In Riyadh, 29 people were reported wounded by flying glass. Saudi Arabia, where most of the U.S.-led multinational troops are based, said the missile exploded after being intercepted in mid-air by U.S. Patriot missiles.

Iraq has fired 29 missiles at Israel and 28 against Saudi Arabia since the hostilities broke out on Jan. 17.

"On heroic men of the missile force, continue your blows, God is on your side. The challenge will continue until they (allies) recog-

nise... our right to our land and the rights of our people of Palestine," the spokesman said.

Al Qadissiya, the Defence Ministry daily, said Iraq was "fighting the mother of battles on behalf of the Arabs and Muslims to liberate our Islamic holy shrines from claws of the atheist invaders."

A commentary on Baghdad Radio said President George Bush was mocking God by calling for a day of prayer Sunday for peace and for U.S. servicemen and women in the Gulf.

"Bush has asked his citizens to pray for the coalition troops. This evildoer, the colleague of the devil, is asking them to pray for the victory of the United States and the gang it is leading," the commentary said.

"Bush has chosen a God of his own, a God that will fulfill the wishes of George Bush..." said the radio. It also said Mr. Bush was exploiting the feelings of the parents of soldiers in the Gulf who want them to go home "alive and not in plastic coffins."

"Hence, Bush is adding to his sins and crimes the crime of mocking God," the radio said.

9 marines killed, 3 missing

Combined agency dispatches

AT LEAST nine American servicemen were killed and three others missing, presumably dead, in several separate Gulf-related incidents Sunday, American spokesmen said.

Seven Marines were killed when their armoured vehicle was hit by a rocket fired by their own side near the Saudi-Kuwaiti border town of Khafji while two others were killed in a helicopter crash while on "escort duty," according to the spokesmen.

The seven marines were on a reconnaissance mission Jan. 29 when they observed Iraqi forces trying to cross the border, Major General Robert Johnston told a daily briefing.

During an ensuing clash, which involved "very intense, very close" combat, the Marines' vehicle was hit by a missile, Gen. Johnston said. "We have reason to conclude it was a friendly missile. It does appear it was a Maverick missile," he added.

A spokesman also said that a Cobra helicopter on escort duty inside Saudi Arabia had crashed, killing its two crew members. A Saudi spokesman said the crash was not related to combat.

A U.S. air force B-52 bomber returning from a mission in Iraq crashed in the Indian Ocean and three of its six crewmen were missing, U.S. officials said.

The huge, eight-engine B-52 bomber crashed late Saturday on route back to its base on Diego Garcia, a sand atoll 3,200 kilometres south of the Gulf.

The command said there was "no evidence that the aircraft was down as a result of hostile fire." It said three of the crew had been rescued and search and rescue efforts for the other three were continuing.

The three crewmen bring to 26 the number of Americans missing in action since the Gulf war began on Jan. 17.

Several dozen of the big B-52 bombers, which date back 35 years and were widely used in Vietnam two decades ago, were brought to Diego Garcia in August as part of the buildup for the war against Iraq.

The bombers, which can carry 30 tons of explosives, have been used daily to pound targets in Kuwait. Military sources say they have concentrated their devastating attacks on suspected Iraqi troop concentrations, especially those of the Republican Guards, considered Iraq's best troops.

In Vietnam, the B-52s flew hundreds of raids and were regarded as one of the best weapons against enemy troop concentrations.

About two dozen of the high-flying bombers were lost in Vietnam. But because of their vulnerability to anti-aircraft missiles they did not venture over north Vietnam until late 1972 when about 16 were shot down in a period of two weeks during raids designed to force Hanoi to the peace table.

Baghdad said Sunday that three U.S. B-52 bombers had arrived at a Turkish air base on flights from London to join in the allied air assault on Iraq.

A Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman in Ankara denied there were any B-52s in the country.

Turkey plans to ask Iraq to

King voices optimism despite worst situation

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday expressed conviction that the Arab Nation will eventually be triumphant and that a new Arab dawn uniting the whole Arab Nation will emerge.

Addressing a meeting grouping the President and vice President of the Royal Jordanian (RJ) and senior RJ Staff, King Hussein said Jordan was currently passing through a difficult stage and a severe test.

The King voiced confidence that Jordan would be able to overcome these difficulties,

through its people's awareness, dedication and hard work.

"It was our destiny to shoulder our responsibilities towards future generation and to overcome the difficult circumstances," The King said. "Right will prevail and will win in the end," he said.

The King voiced confidence in RJ and its leading role in serving the country. He noted that commercial aviation worldwide was passing through a difficult stage due to the current circumstances in the region.

The King also noted that Jordan was currently passing through the worst situation in its history.

The King stressed that RJ "has always been and will be the object of our pride and appreciation and will remain the bridge linking us with the world."

He thanked RJ for its efforts and dedicated work and expressed pride in the level of its services.

RJ Chief Executive Officer and Director General Hussam Abu

Ghazaleh briefed the King on the situation of the carrier and the difficulties it was facing. He noted that RJ had worked out a pilot plan of action before the onset of the Gulf crisis but because of the crisis the carrier was faced with extremely difficult situations which obstructed its work and precluded the implementation of its plan and programmes.

King Hussein was accompanied on the visit by Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

Arens: Israel will retaliate for missile hits

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Defence Minister Moshe Arens Sunday renewed Israel's pledge to retaliate for the Iraqi missiles that have hit the Jewish state, but acknowledged there were logistical problems.

"For us to hit Iraq, we have to pass over a third country," Mr. Arens said. "For us to hit Iraq, we have to act in a theatre of operations in which the allied forces are presently engaged."

He added, "But I think you can trust us that we will find the ways of dealing with these problems."

Israel has been under pressure from the United States not to get involved in the Gulf conflict for fear it will undermine the anti-Iraq coalition, which includes Arab countries technically at war with Israel.

Mr. Arens made the remarks to 330 visiting British Jews.

His comments came just hours after Iraq late Saturday and early Sunday lobbed Scud missiles at the Jewish state. The army refused to give the exact location of

the strikes, saying only the missiles hit in "certain areas."

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said there was more than a 50 per cent chance Iraq would use chemical weapons as its other military options were being eroded by allied bombing. Asked if he believed Iraq would launch a chemical strike, Mr. Hurd told British Broadcasting Corporation radio:

"I have always thought it between likely and probable, that is just over a 50 per cent chance."

The Sunday Times newspaper quoted Pentagon sources as saying President Saddam had given frontline commanders the go-ahead to use chemical weapons.

No landing in Jordan

In Amman, a Jordanian security official said Sunday that no Iraqi Scud missiles had landed in Jordan.

"No missile has fallen on Jordan," the Public Security Depart-

ment spokesman said, after a U.S. military spokesman suggested an Iraqi missile fired at Israel may have fallen on Jordan overnight.

The U.S. military spokesman said during a briefing in the Saudi capital Riyadh that the missile "may have landed in Jordan." He gave no details.

Genscher on Mideast

German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher Sunday suggested that European cooperation arrangements might serve as a model for future peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Genscher said the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe could be used as the basis for a new Middle East order based on renunciation of force, disarmament and cooperation, the recognition of the state of Israel and the Palestinians' right of self-determination.

The 34-nation CSCE is designed to reduce tensions and promote disarmament in Europe.

Mr. Genscher went on to answer criticism that Germany has played a weak role in the Gulf crisis.

"We Germans are not standing on the sidelines, we stand side-by-side in a spirit of solidarity with the Americans and the 27 other nations fighting in the Gulf for a peaceful future," he said.

"We realise that they are also fighting for our future. And we Germans also stand by the Israelis as they defend their right to live," he said.

He said Germany was carrying "more than its fair share," of costs in the Gulf, and had contributed more than \$15 billion (deutsche marks (\$10.2 billion) to operations there.

"Today's critics are often the same who six months ago warned of German superiority," he said, referring to earlier fears about the strength of a united Germany. "We do not seek special treatment, we just seek fairness," he added.

Respite in air raids; missile attacks continue

Combined agency dispatches

A MISSILE CRASHED into a downtown section of Baghdad late Sunday afternoon, sending up a white column of smoke that signalled yet another attack on a capital battered for weeks.

It was the first sign of an air attack since before dawn when a loud explosion somewhere in the city signalled what probably was the arrival of another missile.

The skies over Baghdad were quiet Sunday, free of the sounds of aircraft overhead during frequent air raids. The bombing missions that began on Jan. 17 appear to have hit every warehouse in Baghdad. The allies seemingly are taking no chances of missing a military storage facility.

Several bridges in the city also have been destroyed.

Cruise missiles fired by U.S. warships sometimes strike residential areas. Local newspapers publish pictures showing houses and schools hit by missiles.

"The Iraqi people now know the type of civilisation and new world order that the president of the United States wants to bring to the Arab region..." Iraqi radio said in a commentary Sunday.

It said Iraq now will carry the battle to American interests around the globe.

"The target will not be confined this time to the soldiers of the United States, the mercenaries of its allies or its collaborators in the holy lands in the Arabian Peninsula. The interests of the United States everywhere in the world will also be the target."

"There is a difference between terrorism and struggle. This is a legitimate act..." the radio said.

An Iraqi opposition leader said allied air raids on Iraq had caused hundreds of thousands of civilian casualties.

Sheikh Hadi Al Mudarressi told a news conference in Damascus the Gulf war was aimed at the destruction of Iraq.

"What is going on now is the destruction of Iraq under the cover of liberating Kuwait," said Sheikh Mudarressi, a Shiite Muslim cleric close to Iran.

"There is massive destruction in Iraq... casualties can be counted in the hundreds of thousands."

Sheikh Mudarressi said on one occasion allied aircraft tried to

(Continued on page 4)

Flash floods hit Iran

NICOSIA (AP) — Army helicopters have airlifted more than 2,000 people to safety, but many others remain stranded on rooftops by floodwaters inundating 120 southeastern villages, Iran's official news agency said Sunday.

The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said the worst flooding in a century has left about 30,000 people homeless.

Army helicopters, some conducting high-risk operations, rescued stranded women and children on Saturday and Sunday, the agency said.

Iranian authorities are considering using speed boats to try to rescue people stranded on rooftops by the swift and rising floodwaters, the agency said.

Thousands of hectares of farmland and at least 10,000 livestock have been killed in the flooding that the agency said followed the heaviest rainfall in the last 100 years.

President Hashemi Rafsanjani has sent a delegation to coordinate relief operations carried out by the Red Crescent, the military and other organisations.

More than 1,500 houses have been destroyed or damaged, the agency said.

IRNA said the swift waters and the rising level of the Hirmand River have hindered relief efforts.

"The high speed and overflow of water has made people and relief teams unable to utilize the existing facilities to control the floods," it said.

The agency said all roads connecting villages in Shahraki, Narouie and Miyankang districts with Zabol, northeast of the city of Zabadan, have been blocked. Zabadan is near the point where the borders of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan meet. Zabol is in a thumb-shaped span of Iran surrounded on three sides by Soviet and Afghan territory.

"It is hard to save those besieged by the floods through land due to absence of Chinook helicopters in the region," IRNA said.

(Continued on page 3)

Answers elude fight against Gulf oil slick

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — War is making it hard for pollution experts to prepare defences against the largest oil spill in history heading down the Gulf, and Iran Sunday called for an urgent meeting of the states, including Iraq, to discuss the problem.

"We are being starved of information," Derek Brown, a Bahrain Petroleum Company environmental consultant, said Sunday. "We don't get adequate information to know what we are facing."

Two vast slicks resulting from the Gulf war threaten water supplies, coasts and wildlife from the rich habitats of Kuwait Bay in the north to the United Arab Emirates in the south.

Knowing the type of oil in the slicks is vital for attempts to clean it up.

But Gulf authorities have yet to find out the real size, speed or composition of the main slick, which originated in Kuwait. A second slick, coming from Iraq, is far about half the size of the first.

Oil industry and government officials from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the toppled regime

of Kuwait met in the Bahrain capital Manama Sunday to assess the crisis.

Officials said Iran has requested a meeting of the health ministers of the Gulf littoral states, including Iraq, to discuss the slick.

Ali Sibewieh, a spokesman for the Iranian embassy in Bahrain, said the meeting was scheduled for Feb. 17 in Tehran.

Mr. Sibewieh said his request was made to the Regional Organisation for the Protection of the Marine Environment which groups Iran, Iraq and the Gulf Cooperation Council member states. The council includes Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Kuwait.

Khaled Fakhro, vice-chairman of the environmental committee of Bahrain, said his government was planning to take part. He added that he believed other governments in the council would also participate.

An official from the Saudi Arabian government, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the kingdom was considering the request.

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Nusseibeh's jail term cut; Husseini questioned

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel Sunday cut in half, to three months, the prison sentence imposed without a trial on Palestinian activist accused of spying for Iraq.

An army statement announced the reduction of the detention order for Sari Nusseibeh, a 41-year-old Palestinian professor, after a court found the shorter sentence would likely cover the duration of the Gulf war.

Dr. Nusseibeh was detained last Tuesday on allegations that he was "collecting security information for Iraqi intelligence, especially after the missile attacks on Israel."

Dr. Nusseibeh has denied the allegations, and the London-based human rights group Amnesty International termed him "a prisoner of conscience." It said that available evidence suggests he was jailed for "his peaceful political opinions and activities."

Dr. Nusseibeh was educated at Oxford University in England and Harvard in the United States. He is a professor of philosophy at Bir Zeit University in the occupied West Bank.

He is known as a moderate among activists supporting the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). In its statement, Amnesty noted that he is "known for his stand and public activities

in favour of negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis."

Dr. Nusseibeh is being held under "administrative detention," a practice dating to British rule in mandatory Palestine that allows people to be imprisoned without formal charge or trial.

Asked to approve the jailing, the court recommended Sunday that Dr. Nusseibeh be held for three months instead of the six months originally ordered, a defence ministry statement said.

Police meanwhile questioned another Palestinian leader this weekend for allegedly forcing an Arab to give false testimony on the Oct. 8 massacre in Jerusalem, officials said Saturday.

Faisal Al Hussein, a pro-PLO activist, was questioned for two hours Friday night and then released on his own recognisance, police said.

He said police suspected Mr. Hussein of threatening an Arab from Jerusalem into lying about the Oct. 8 incidents.

The Arab man, who was not identified, told police his earlier testimony was false, given under pressure from Mr. Hussein and other Palestinian leaders, police said without elaborating.

Investigation was continuing and police could not say if charges would be brought against Mr. Hussein.

Algeria: Allies want to destroy Iraq

BRUSSELS (R) — The United States and its allies are using the Gulf war as a pretext to destroy Iraq, Algerian Foreign Minister Sid Ahmad Ghazali said Sunday.

He said the allies' declared aim in sending troops to the Gulf — "to defend" Saudi Arabia — had been extended first to retaking Kuwait and then to knocking out Iraq's military and economic capacity.

"One is driven to conclude that the liberation of Kuwait is ultimately no more than a pretext and that the initial goal, perhaps, even before the invasion of Kuwait, was the destruction of Iraq," he said in an interview on Belgian television.

Mr. Ghazali said allied aircraft had targeted Iraq's social and economic infrastructure and inflicted thousands of civilian casualties.

"It's been said that this is a surgical war. Well, there is micro-surgery and there is major surgery and here it's something other than micro-surgery," he said. Iraq says 320 civilians have died and 400 have been wounded in coalition attacks.

Mr. Ghazali met Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Saadoun Hammadi in Tehran Saturday.

He said Iraq had not consulted Iran before scores of its aircraft flew to the safety of Iranian air bases last week.

Mr. Ghazali said he thought a diplomatic solution to the crisis was still possible, adding that there had been no opportunity for real negotiations before the war started on Jan. 17.

Asked what he thought of Iraq's threat to use chemical weapons, Mr. Ghazali replied that the United States had 1,900 nuclear warheads in the Gulf region.

"What is the difference between saying 'I will use chemical weapons' on the one hand and on the other saying nothing but having 1,900 nuclear warheads?"

Iran's chief judge said Tehran wanted to "extinguish fires" of the Gulf war through its neutrality and diplomatic clout in the region.

"This is not a war between Islam and infidelity but it is a war between (arrogant) might and expansionism," the national news agency IRNA quoted Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi as saying.



BOMBED OUT: Rescue workers sift through the rubble of buildings hit in the allied bombardment of Iraqi cities, towns and villages (Al Qadissiya photo)

Lebanon, at peace for once, becomes spectator to war

By Mohammad Salam
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — The Lebanese, ravaged by war for more than 15 years, are relishing their newfound peace and unaccustomed role as spectators in the Gulf war.

But they are eyeing neighbouring Israel warily, fearful Palestinian bases in Lebanon could be targeted if the Israelis are dragged further into the conflict by Iraq's Scud missile attacks.

Cartoonist Pierre Sadeq captured the bemusement of many Lebanese. In a Sadeq cartoon in the newspaper Al Dilyar, two Lebanese men are watching the war on television. One says to the other: "We're watching those who've been watching us for more than 15 years."

Beirut and its environs have been at peace, more or less, since early December, when militiamen withdrew from the city under an Arab League-sponsored peace plan overseen by President Elias Hrawi and backed by Syrian troops.

Under the plan, the militias are supposed to disarm as the Lebanese army, with Syrian support, reinstates government control over the country.

"We're not the tools, and we're not the victims of a war in the Middle East for the first time in 15 years," said Ibrahim Hasbani, a Muslim bank employee. "Of

course, one feels sorry for the people being killed in the Gulf, but at the same time, it's not our war."

So far, the plan to formally end a civil war in which an estimated 150,000 people have been killed seems to be working, although not everyone is sure the peace will last.

"It's nice to enjoy peace, especially when the world around you is on fire," says Jacqueline Qabbout, a housewife. "The people in the Gulf have enjoyed their wealth and spent their millions lavishly when we were living like rats in bunkers and underground shelters."

The Lebanese government has declared its support for the allied coalition in the Gulf war and for the restoration of Kuwait's toppled government.

Although Lebanon is not directly involved in the war, its effects are being felt here.

Since the war began Jan. 17, six bombs have exploded at Western and Saudi targets in Lebanon. The worst blast, at a bank in Baalbek half-owned by a French company, killed a security guard.

The prices of basic commodities have jumped by at least 35 per cent in Lebanon since the allied air attack on Iraq began, and many Lebanese have rushed to stockpile food, fuel and drinking water.

The government has sent in-

spectors to penalise gas stations, groceries and bakeries that sell goods at inflated prices.

Some Lebanese radio and television stations have been broadcasting war news around the clock. Many Beirut restaurants and nightclubs installed TV sets so their clientele could keep up with developments.

"We used to switch off the music and put on news flashes because everyone was really interested. But some people complained that they go out to night clubs to forget their own war and not to watch somebody else's," said waiter Antoine Jajji at one night spot in West Beirut.

"Now we've put the TV in a separate room. The waiters spread the word to those who're interested if there are any major developments in the Gulf and they rush to watch."

Many Lebanese are worried that if their southern neighbour, Israel, becomes involved in the war it might attack the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) estimated 6,000 guerrillas in South Lebanon.

"Of course we'll suffer again if Israel takes part in the Gulf war," said Hussein Haidar, who runs an import-export business in Beirut.

"Israel would certainly try to eliminate the PLO force in Lebanon, regardless of whether the Palestinians were attacking it or not," he commented.

In case of the war being prolonged and brutal bombardments of Iraqi residential areas continued by the U.S.-led coalition from Saudi soil... Muslims may stage an all-out ban on Haj ceremonies in protest against the bourse of Saudi (Saudi royal family) inviting infidel troops to its sacred land," the paper said in an editorial carried by the national news agency IRNA.

This year's Haj rituals fall in June.

The paper, which has in the past reflected the views of the Foreign Ministry, said Iraq, Yemen, Jordan, Sudan, Libya, Algeria, Mauritania and Lebanon may stay away from the pilgrimage to the holy sites in Mecca and Medina.

Iran has boycotted the ritual for the past three years following the killing of more than 400 people, mostly Iranian pilgrims, in clashes with Saudi police in 1987.

Tehran has refused to accept a Saudi ban on political demonstrations during the Haj and a quota system limiting the number of pilgrims individual countries can send.

One of Iran's leading clerics has accused President George Bush of slaughtering Iraqi civilians in allied bombing raids.

In a letter to the U.S. president, Grand Ayatollah Moham-

Egypt's opposition calls for Gulf ceasefire

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's main opposition parties Sunday called for a ceasefire in the Gulf to allow for a peaceful solution to the conflict.

But they offered no suggestion on ways to end the crisis and said a truce should not be linked to an Iraqi pledge to pull out of Kuwait.

The influential Muslim Brotherhood, the leftist Socialist Labour Party, the Liberal Party, the National Unionist Progressive Party and four other smaller groups held a press conference during which they issued a statement saying:

"We condemn the brutal attack launched by the American and allied forces on the Iraqi people."

"We demand that this war stop immediately and call for a peaceful settlement of the Gulf conflict and other issues in the Middle East at the forefront of which is the Palestinian question."

Opposition groups, except for the right-of-centre Wafd party which generally has supported the government's Gulf policy, have condemned the Gulf war and the allies' massive air raids on Iraq.

Some groups, like the Muslim Brotherhood and the Labour Party have called for the pull out of Egyptian troops from the U.S.-led anti-Iraq coalition.

At Sunday's press conference held at the Liberal Party headquarters in downtown Cairo, the leaders of the groups said they have no plans to offer on peaceful means to end the conflict. They said each party may have different ideas but they refused to elaborate.

Ibrahim Shukri of the Labour Party said in previous conflicts in the Middle East, such as the 1967 and '73 Arab-Israeli wars, securing a ceasefire was never conditional on the invading country's promise to withdraw. He said this

condition should not be imposed on Iraq now.

Maamoun Hudeibi, a senior member of the Muslim Brotherhood said the Gulf conflict and the Palestinian question should be linked, as spelled out in the statement signed by the groups.

The United States and other members of the anti-Iraq coalition, including Egypt have refused such a connection.

"The allied forces are led by the United States which clearly wants to destroy the Iraqi army and Iraq itself. It used the question of Kuwait as an excuse to embark on this scenario," Mr. Shukri said.

He said for an Arab country to occupy another is clearly unacceptable but the solution should come from "within the Arab family without the intervention of foreign forces."

Mr. Hudeibi said the allies are destroying Iraq to leave Israel as the only military power in the Middle East.

"No matter what sin the ruler of Iraq and his regime have committed, we cannot have a response which only makes things worse."

"The destruction of Iraq means that the only country with any power in the region will be Israel... we should not be helping this by sending our troops (to the Gulf) to achieve our enemies' goal," he said.

Almost all opposition parties have boycotted the last parliamentary elections because of allegations of fraud and are not represented in the People's Assembly, where the government's Gulf policy enjoys overwhelming support.

The leaders said the statement issued Sunday will be circulated among the population to gather signatures and then will be delivered to the presidential palace.

Iran paper suggests mass boycott of Haj

NICOSIA (R) — A Tehran newspaper said Sunday Iran and other Muslim countries may boycott the annual pilgrimage to Mecca in protest at the presence of the U.S.-led forces in Saudi Arabia.

"Participation in this year's Haj ceremonies in view of the massive presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia to massacre Muslims cannot be accepted by Islamic Iran," said Tehran Times.

Iranian officials have condemned bombings of civilian targets in Iraq by allied aircraft in the Gulf.

"In case of the war being prolonged and brutal bombardments of Iraqi residential areas continued by the U.S.-led coalition from Saudi soil... Muslims may stage an all-out ban on Haj ceremonies in protest against the bourse of Saudi (Saudi royal family) inviting infidel troops to its sacred land," the paper said in an editorial carried by the national news agency IRNA.

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One of Iran's leading clerics has accused President George Bush of slaughtering Iraqi civilians in allied bombing raids.

In a letter to the U.S. president, Grand Ayatollah Moham-

mad Reza Golpayegani said forcing Iraq from Kuwait was no excuse for killing innocent Iraqis.

"To oust Iraq from Kuwait does not give you the right to launch thousands of raids on residential areas or massacre civilian people," he said.

"You should know the world holds you and Saddam (Hussein) responsible for the war."

He said no international laws or United Nations resolutions authorised such action.

He condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, called on Iraqi troops to withdraw from the emirate and for foreign troops to leave the Gulf.

"This is not a war whose consequences you can tolerate easily, even if you could presumably win a military victory."

"Mr. President, you have set afire the region by such mass killings. You should fear that the flames should spread to the world," he said.

Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Javad Mansoori said Sunday Iran will not allow Pakistani volunteers wanting to fight for Iraq in the Gulf war to cross its territory.

The Jamiat Ulema-i-Pakistan (JUP) political party has said about 110,000 Muslims volunteers want to join Iraqi troops in a jihad against the U.S.-led allied forces and it had asked Iran to grant them passage.

Mr. Mansoori told a news conference that "no possibility at present exists" for allowing such passage as Iran was neutral in the war and barred by international law from doing so.

But he said Pakistan could send relief goods to Iraq through the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

Jnp leader Shah Ahmad Noorani said last month his party had also asked the Pakistan government for permission to send the volunteers it had recruited across the country.

Journalists under heavy restrictions on war coverage

By Mort Rosenblum
The Associated Press

DHAHRAN — U.S. military arrangements for covering Operations Desert Storm are blocking access to the war, masking reality and leading to contradictory reports, journalists say.

With limited eyewitness accounts, the reporters say, readers and viewers around the world were dependent upon allied communiques and Defence Department briefings for news on the war with Iraq.

In the first ground battle, at Khafji, a press pool was kept far away from the action. Pool reporters had to quote staff officers from field headquarters.

Reporter and photographers who got into Khafji on their own found a much different picture than that offered at headquarters, with intense firefights by probing Iraqis. U.S. public affairs officers arrived and ejected non-pool newsmen.

The pool later produced gripping details after marine artillery enabled the Saudis to secure Khafji. But, without direct re-

porting on how effectively the Iraqis fought, they relied on allied sources.

Journalists called that the latest in a series of difficulties in a system which discourages officers and fighting men from speaking frankly and keeps newsmen from seeing things firsthand.

"The pool system is an abomination," said Malcolm Browne of the New York Times, who reported from Vietnam in 1961 before the first U.S. casualty.

He said some U.S. restrictions were apparently meant to avoid upsetting Saudi authorities who were reluctant to allow unsupervised travel in the kingdom.

Tony Clifton of Newsweek, who has reported every major war since Biafra in the 1960s, blamed U.S. guidelines for distorting coverage by keeping newsmen from the news.

Clifton said he spent weeks in vain trying to reach an air force chaplain friend, based less than 1½ kilometres away from the press center, as rules forbid coverage outside the pools.

"In 20 years, the only nation I've found to be more restrictive

— and not much more restrictive — was Iraq," he said. "I certainly saw more action with the Iraqis (against Iran) than now with the Americans."

Greg English, an Associated Press photographer who is not in a pool, echoed Clifton's remark: "The last time I had so much trouble taking pictures was in South Africa."

Of the 757 journalists and technicians registered with the U.S. Joint Information Bureau (JIB), 106 were assigned to pools. About half of them wait in Dhahran, some camp with combat units, and others make brief forays to ships or air bases.

The Defence Department designed 12 pools and let journalists themselves determine who would be included. Coordinators drew up lists, not without bitter disputes.

Several television correspondents and photographers who sought to cover the war outside of the pool had their credentials revoked by the Saudi authorities.

On Thursday, R.W. Apple of the New York Times noisily be-

rated U.S. army Colonel William Mulvey, head of the JIB, about the pool.

Mulvey said in an interview that the 170 pool reports so far spoke in favour of the system.

"We're committed to getting the story out," he said.

Most reporters agreed that JIB officers tried hard to work within the system.

David Lamb, a seasoned Los Angeles Times reporter who covered Vietnam, called the pools essential because of the number of newsmen and the geography of the war.

Although pools should not be the only source of news, he said, "they enable us to get a lot of good human-face reporting in a timely manner."

But, most said, the system was restrictive and prone to selective coverage, logistics problems and delays and squelched details which distorted reality.

Public affairs officers frequently interceded to direct questions and rephrase answers. When one naval officer spoke of "captured" Iraqis, after their boat was sunk,

an escort made it "rescued."

Often, reporters find that in private, servicemen reveal different views from those expressed in front of officers.

Leon Daniel, chief United Press International correspondent who started in Vietnam in 1966, faulted reporters and editors for accepting the system.

"Segments of the press have already surrendered to the military minders," he said. "What you have is what the shrinks (psychiatrists) call the Stockholm syndrome."

The Stockholm syndrome refers to a tendency of hostages to cling to small kindnesses from their captors, eventually seeing them as allies.

Television reporters are equally vehement.

"We are barred from even the most basic access," said Christiane Amanpour of Cable News Network. "We are not allowed to report news. If we happened to stumble across news, we can't use it because it has to be cleared."

When the fighter-bomber pilots returned to carriers after

the air war started, she said, public affairs officers kept the pilots away for 14 hours. Then they coached them before they went on camera, putting them on edge.

"The military couldn't have hoped in its wildest dreams to have had such good publicity before the war started," she said. "Now suddenly we are the enemy."

Arthur Kent of the NBC broadcasting network said, "the pools are effectively a branch of the U.S. military."

The disappearance of a four-man television crew from the CBS broadcasting network, headed by Bob Simon, has heightened friction. Some U.S. and Saudi press officers call it an example of what happens when rules are flouted.

But navy reporters say that they have to take more risks to do their jobs because of the restrictions.

"They are making things more dangerous than they have to be," said John Kifer of the New York Times.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

PRAYER TIMES

05:05 Fajr
06:24 (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:49 Dhuhur
14:49 'Asr
17:15 Maghreb
18:34 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifish Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terraviva Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be cold, cloudy and rainy, and snow is expected to fall in hilly areas. In Aqaba, it will be cloudy and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain.

	Min./max. temp.
Amman	2 / 5
Deserts	6 / 15
Jordan Valley	2 / 8
	4 / 14

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 7.5, Aqaba 19. Humidity readings: Amman 98 per cent, Aqaba 28 per cent.

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Abdul Majid Al Sha'er 791405
Dr. Munir Al Quraym 776238
Dr. Jamal Abu Baker 746426
Dr. Saad Abu Hatab 649846
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate

REPAIRS

Abdali Telephone Repairs 623101
Jordan Television 661101
Radio Jordan 771111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

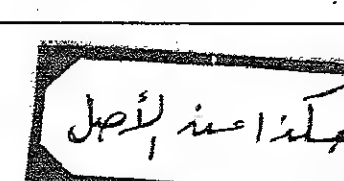
HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldil Maternity, J. Amn 642816
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple 550 / 480

Banana	500 / 450
Banana (Munassar)	460 / 400
Beans	460 / 380
Cabbage	200 / 150
Carrot	200 / 150
Cauliflower	300 / 250
Corn	200 / 150
Cucumbers (large)	150 / 100
Cucumbers (small)	200 / 150
Dates	300 / 250
Eggplant	500 / 400
ZARQA:	200 / 150
Garlic	1600 / 1400
Lemon	240 / 180
Marrow (large)	140 / 100
Marrow (small)	320 / 240
Onion (dry)	270 / 220
Onion (green)	180 / 140
Okra	600 / 500
Orange	460 / 200
Pepper (hot)	340 / 300
Pepper (sweet)	160 / 100
Potato	250 / 200
Radish	300 / 50
Sage	400 / 300
Spanish	140 / 100
Tomatoes	160 / 120



Palestinian anger simmers under longest ever Israeli curfew

By Robert Mahoney

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — Without money, hope or enough food, Palestinians are growing restive after more than two weeks confined to their homes by the Israeli army.

Israel is afraid to let them out with the Gulf war still raging but equally fears the simmering anger and frustration could boil over into revolt, particularly in the volatile Gaza Strip, security sources said.

To ease the pressure the Israeli army has lifted the curfew for a few hours in some towns and refugee camps in the past few days.

But occupation forces refuse to let more than 100,000 Arab workers return to jobs inside Israel even though this would relieve the desperate lack of money in the occupied territories.

"The authorities are frightened that if they let Palestinians back into Tel Aviv the attacks will begin again," one security source said. He was referring to a spate of attacks on Israelis late last year, after police shot dead at least 20 Palestinians in Jerusalem.

"It only takes the Arab with a knife to try to establish the linkage," he said, referring to linkage between the Gulf crisis and Israeli occupation of Arab lands that some Israeli politicians con-

code has already been established with Scud missiles landing on Israel.

Palestinians see Iraqi President Saddam Hussein as a champion of their three-year-old revolt against Israeli rule and accuse Washington and its anti-Iraq coalition of double standards.

Whistling and cheering erupted in many houses when Iraq fired another Scud missile against Israel on Sunday morning. Witnesses said soldiers fired into the air in several towns to quieten the celebration.

The defence ministry has blocked proposals to bus Arab workers under army escort to jobs in Israel, the sources said.

"Even if we lift the curfew (Defence Minister Moshe) Arens is not willing to risk letting them back," one source said.

"There is no room for experiments," Brigadier-General Freddy Zach, the number two administrator for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, told reporters Sunday.

That is bad news for Salim, 33, of Gaza's Shati camp. He has worked in Israel for 16 years, supporting his extended family of eight people.

"We are desperate. I have run out of money," he told Reuters by telephone. Reporters have been barred from the Gaza Strip since the curfew was clamped on its 650,000 residents 18 days ago.

"We don't have the money to buy the few vegetables and fruit which are on sale."

The U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) took advantage of a few hours curfew relaxation last week to start distributing three kilograms of skimmed milk and 50 kilograms of flour to each refugee family.

"Nobody is starving but there is very little food and the situation is coming where people do not eat enough," an UNRWA official said.

Residents said oranges were falling unpicked from trees and tomatoes rotting in fields while many farmers sat in the cinder block houses of Gaza's grim refugee camps.

Hashem Etta Elahawa, director of the Association of Citrus Growers in Gaza, appealed in a telegram to Arens Sunday for the curfew to be lifted.

"A lot of families are hungry and desperate," he said.

UNRWA officials said the more than one million people in the West Bank were also suffering although the curfew was less strictly enforced in villages away from the 1967 green line border with Israel.

"It's Gaza which is one whole refugee camp and very tense," a security source said. "It might take just one incident to trigger an explosion. People are frustrated enough to do it."



Her Majesty Queen Noor listens to Dr. Abdullah Khatib (on the Queen's right) during a meeting the Queen chaired Sunday (Petra photo)

Queen Noor chairs meeting of voluntary, charitable societies

AMMAN (J.T.) — As part of Jordan's preparations for developments resulting from the Gulf war, Her Majesty Queen Noor Sunday chaired an expanded meeting of charitable and voluntary societies in the Kingdom.

The Queen was briefed on the work of voluntary societies, civil defence and the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) in general and their preparations for emergencies in particular. Head of the General Union

of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) Abdullah Al Khatib told the meeting that the number of volunteers offering themselves to work in emergency situations reached 50,000. In-kind and cash donations were generously offered by Jordanians, Khatib reported.

Heads of various voluntary groups presented briefings on their activities, which, among other things, cover the provision of ambulances, food and

medical supplies, shelters and evacuation centres.

Queen Noor lauded GUVS' efforts and expressed appreciation of the private sector's contributions to the national effort.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the Ministries of Health and Social Development, JNRCS, the Civil Defence Department, the General Federation of Jordanian Women and Noor Al Hussein Foundation Director General Inaam Al Mufti.

Rain increases Kingdom's water reserves

AMMAN (Petra) — Rain has increased the Kingdom's supplies of water collected in the various dams and seeping underground. To assess the amount of water collected by the King Talal Dam, Water and Irrigation Minister Saad Hayel Al Sour Sunday paid a visit to the dam and its electricity generating plant.

The minister was briefed by officials at the site on the water discharge and purification systems. He inspected the dam's electricity generating plant.

The plant generates electricity through two water turbines, with

a generating capacity of 3,000 kilowatt per hour each.

Sour also visited Jarash water department where he was briefed by the department head on the water situation in the district.

The minister visited the water distribution station in Baqa and listened to a briefing by an official on water distribution in the area.

In an interview with Petra, Sour said that since the rain season for this year was late, it caused common concern among Jordanians. However, the minister said, the heavy rainfall during the last two weeks has increased

the country's reserves significantly, giving Jordanians a feeling of relative relief.

Water Authority Secretary General Abdul Aziz Al Wishah said in a statement to Petra that the recent heavy rainfall increased the water collected in King Talal Dam from six million cubic metres just two weeks ago to 14 million cubic metres now.

He noted that Wadi Al Arab dam holds now six million cubic metres of water and that Wadi Shubayh and Kafreen dams have one million and two million cubic metres respectively.

'Arabs-out' activist voted into Israeli cabinet

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The Israeli cabinet on Sunday voted to include in the government a new, right-wing minister who advocates the expulsion of Palestinians from the occupied territories.

The decision must be approved by parliament where Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir — who pushed for the inclusion of Rafi Zeevi in the cabinet — controls a majority of the votes.

Three ministers voted against the inclusion of Mr. Zeevi of the far-right Mokedet Party in the cabinet. Two abstained.

The three who voted against were key officials in the government and of Mr. Shamir's Likud bloc: Foreign Minister David Levy, Justice Minister Dan Meridor and Health Minister Ehud Olmert.

Israeli media reports said Mr. Shamir nominated Mr. Zeevi to broaden his coalition and strengthen his position against any land-peace compromise, as advocated by the United States.

Mr. Zeevi would become a minister without portfolio and the 9th member of the cabinet. He could also be included in the defence cabinet of key officials who decide military and security issues.

Mr. Zeevi's party calls for the ouster of Arabs from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. He defended his position Sunday in Israel Radio.

"I said that if the Arabs of the land of Israel hurt us operationally, disrupt life as part of a war as they have been called to do by their leaders, headed by the Moslem Brotherhood, then they will be expelled," Mr. Zeevi said.

He denied Moslem Brotherhood stood for "transfer by will or agreement," saying it's call for "transfer by will or agreement."

Since the Gulf war erupted on Jan. 17, Mr. Zeevi has been a vocal advocate of swift Israeli action against Iraqi missile attacks.

"The war is not only on the Jews of Israel and Kuwait and is limited to missile attacks on Tel Aviv. After this war, there will be a fight over the future of the land of Israel," Mr. Zeevi said in a television interview.

Americans evacuate more staff

AMMAN (R) — The American embassy said Sunday it was evacuating more staff from Jordan after anti-Western attacks in the region.

"Certainly the general situation has prompted another look at embassy levels," the embassy's spokesman said, when asked if the move was connected to recent anti-Western attacks. The spokesman himself was

one of those being evacuated.

A diplomatic source said 10 to 12 people were being sent home, leaving about 20 of the original 120 staff at the mission.

Several Western embassies in Yemen were attacked last week in retaliation for the Western-led war on Iraq. Baghdad on Sunday renewed threats to hit U.S. and Western targets worldwide.

Marines

(Continued from page 1)

reduce the number of embassy personnel in Ankara next week, a government official said Sunday.

The official said the Turkish request would be relayed to Iraq's ambassador in the next few days.

Iraq would be asked to reduce its staff by one-third, including all its intelligence staff, the official said.

Iraqi embassy officials were not available for comment. Twenty diplomats are officially listed as working out of the embassy.

Gen. Johnston said in Riyadh that another death inside Saudi Arabia may also have been caused by "friendly fire."

In that incident, first reported Saturday, one marine was killed and two wounded when bombs dropped on a convoy.

The General said the United States and its allies had flown 2,500 missions in the previous 24 hours. This took the total to more than 41,000 since the war began on Jan. 17.

But he said there had been very little action along the border between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Baghdad radio also said Sunday that seven American airmen shot down by Iraqi anti-aircraft fire had been turned over by Syria to the U.S. embassy in Damascus, but Syria and the embassy denied the report.

The radio said Syria had released the pilots to the embassy "in the past two days," but gave little more information.

The official Syrian Arab News Agency said the report was "completely fabricated."

"We've heard that story. The story is untrue," said Bill Murphy, an embassy spokesman in Damascus.

In Geneva, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said Sunday it had visited 328 Iraqi prisoners of (PoWs) war to date.

But its delegates in Baghdad had yet to receive permission to see captured allied pilots, a spokesman said.

The spokesman said the ICRC visited 326 Iraqis in Saudi Arabia and two others detained in Bi-

tain as suspected members of their country's armed forces.

Polish President Lech Walesa was quoted Saturday as saying he would be prepared to go to Baghdad in the search for a peaceful solution to the Gulf war.

In an interview with the Catholic weekly *Il Sabato*, Mr. Walesa also called for greater public pressure to force both sides in the conflict to reach a negotiated settlement.

"I'm ready to go to Baghdad," he said. "I have a clear duty imposed on me by being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize."

A senior French envoy, on his way home from Gulf war talks in Iran, stopped off in Ankara Sunday for talks with Foreign Minister Ahmet Kurotspe Akpemozin.

A French diplomat said Francois Scherer, secretary-general at the French Foreign Ministry, discussed the Gulf war with his Turkish counterpart Tngay Ozgen.

A further 320 Gulf refugees crossed into Iran from Iraq and were housed in temporary camps, the Iranian news agency IRNA said.

It said the refugees from Sudan, Tunisia and India entered through Khosravi, the main crossing point with Iraq in western Iran.

A senior Kuwaiti diplomat flew to Tehran Sunday carrying a message to Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani from Kuwait's exiled emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, the Kuwaiti news agency said.

No further details were available of the trip to Iran by Sheikh Nasser Mohammad Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, a minister of state for foreign affairs of the toppled Kuwaiti government.

He left Taif en route to Iran.

Suez Canal authorities were searching a Cypriot cargo ship Sunday after receiving information it might be involved in an Iraqi-planned attack on the strategic waterway, a canal official said.

The official said the Neos, a general cargo ship flying under the Cypriot flag, was detained at the northern tip of the Suez Canal in Port Said Saturday.

Doctors, nurses head for Iraq; donations on the rise

AMMAN (Agencies) — An Amman-based Arab committee has sent Iraq medicine worth JD 150,000 (\$225,000) since the Gulf war began on Jan. 17, an official said Sunday.

Mamdouh Abbadi, head of the Jordan Medical Association, said the group formed last month had sent supplies including antibiotics and morphine.

"Our Iraqi brothers need our help because the situation of health services there is deteriorating day after day," he told Reuters.

"It is always the civilian casualties who suffer most because they do not get the treatment offered to military casualties," he added.

The committee, which groups several Arab medical associations, had also sent 32 Algerian, Jordanian and Palestinian doctors to Iraq over the past three weeks.

Abbadi said the committee notified the government of the medicine supplies and sought visas for the doctors from Iraq's embassy in Amman.

The U.N. embargo against Iraq does not apply to medicines and food sent on humanitarian grounds.

Jordanians have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to buy supplies or send money to Iraq.

German Muslims offer help

The Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) has re-

ceived a pledge from Muslim groups in Germany offering help for humanitarian operations in Jordan.

JNRCS President Ahmad Abu Oqura said that he received the offer from Dr. Ahmad Khalifa who represents the Islamic cultural centre in Munich. Khalifa said that Muslims in Germany were ready to send relief supplies, and other types of aid to JNRCS for the benefit of children in Jordan and Iraq.

Canadian Arabs

President of the Arab community in Canada Nabil Fawzi condemned the U.S.-led aggression on Iraq, the bombardment of civilians, economic installations and religious and cultural targets in that country.

The Arab and Muslim peoples condemn these aggressive acts committed against Iraq and its people and denounce Israel's arbitrary measures in the occupied Arab territories, he said.

Fawzi expressed grief over the mass killing of Iraqi children and women by the allied forces. He called for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in the Gulf war, and the withdrawal of the U.S. and allied forces from the region.

Doctors, nurses leave for Iraq

The Arab Doctors Union's (ADU) emergency committee said Saturday it was continuing to

send doctors, surgeons and nurses to Iraq to offer medical assistance.

ADU's Secretary General Hassan Khreis said three medical teams had been dispatched, while another team of 22 doctors and nurses would be on its way soon, carrying medicines and medical equipment.

Khreis told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that additional medical teams from Arab countries like Algeria, Libya Tunisia and Palestine would be sent to Iraq for humanitarian purposes.

Khreis expressed gratitude to Jordanians for their generous contributions to this noble cause. On Saturday ADU issued a statement denouncing U.S.-led coalition attacks on innocent civilians in Iraq that resulted in the killing of women and children.

The allied forces have committed brutal air raids on civilian population centres, cultural, scientific and economic targets as well as on oil tankers, causing huge oil spills in the Gulf waters with disastrous ecological consequences, the ADU statement said.

The statement strongly condemned Israel's inhuman practices against the Arab people in the occupied Palestinian land. It said that the continuous curfews imposed on the Arabs have caused serious deterioration in health services with detrimental results on the children, in violation of all international principles and laws.

House meets Wednesday

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament convenes Wednesday morning in a session expected to be attended by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and cabinet members.

The House's foreign affairs committee held a session Sunday and heard a briefing by Foreign Minister Taber Al Masri on the outcome of his recent trip to Iran, the present political situation in the Middle East region and Jordan's stand regarding the Gulf crisis.

Masri, who last week held extensive talks with Iranian leaders concerning the U.S.-led aggression on Iraq and the convening of an Islamic conference to end the conflict, stressed Jordan's firm stand regarding the war in the Gulf and emphasised the Kingdom's attitude towards various issues in the region.

Two other House committees, the legal and the administrative committees held separate meetings to review amendments to laws referred to them by the House for recommendations.

House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat Sunday received Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Al Tayeeb Abdul Rahim and discussed with him developments of the Gulf war.

Government to reconsider controversial decision

AMMAN (J.T.) — A controversial government decision restricting the use of private cars could be suspended and a coupon system introduced, prime ministry sources said Sunday.

The sources said that a decision to suspend the new measures, announced last Thursday, followed public protests through the media, a call-in-radio programme and other means including numerous telephone calls to the concerned ministries.

Prime Minister Mudar Badran Saturday met with the emergency committees at both houses of Parliament and discussed the application of the recent regulations restricting the use of private cars to alternate odd, even days of the month as of Feb. 5. The question of using coupons for buying gasoline was among a number of proposals discussed at the meeting.

Committee sources were quoted by Al Ra'i Arabic daily Sunday as saying that the order will be implemented provided that coupons would be introduced in a week's time from now.

The government will study the various proposals submitted by people in various sectors and will take appropriate measures including exceptions and amendments to the regulations in general.

Minister of Energy Thabet Al Taher said in a statement published in Sunday's Arabic press.

The decision to restrict cars to operate every other day has received an angry response from the people at large, especially because the country's public transport system does not cover all areas at different times of day and night.

Public Transport Corporation (PTC) Director General Sulaiman Al Hababeh was quoted by the press as saying that his corporation has only a fleet of 300 buses, which are not sufficient to cover all regions in the capital and the PTC is no position to acquire new buses.

Hababeh noted that a recent study conducted by the Ministry of Transport and Telecommunications showed that only 20 per cent of the total population use the PTC buses, while 70 per cent travel by sharing cars or roving taxis.

'Japanese military planes to evacuate refugees'

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Japanese parliamentary delegation led by deputy Toshio Yamaguchi Sunday ended a three-day visit to Jordan and left for Damascus on the third leg of their current Middle Eastern tour.

The delegation was received by His Majesty King Hussein and held meeting with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and government officials to discuss Jordanian-Japanese economic cooperation and means by which Japan could help Jordan deal with the evacuees problem.

The Japanese offered to send military transport planes to repatriate foreign nationals. According to a statement by Japan's Foreign Ministry Sunday, Tokyo has secured Jordan's approval for Japanese military planes to use Amman airport to ferry Gulf war refugees to their home countries.

The Associated Press (AP) news agency quoted officials in Tokyo as saying that despite objections at home for any military involvement abroad, Japan has promised to provide military planes and crews for transporting the refugees on humanitarian basis.

Asked by the Jordan Times to comment on the AP report from

The city of Amman has expanded and the PTC cannot provide sufficient buses to the sprawling areas; and additional number of schools and colleges sprung up that placed further burdens on the transport sector in Amman and other towns, Hababeh conceded.

The PTC sustained JD 52,000 loss in 1989 and JD 42,000 in 1988, but is not expected to show any losses in 1990 because the PTC had leased buses to the government for the transport of evacuees from the border region, earlier in the Gulf crisis, Hababeh added.

Hababeh said that the PTC can by no means present a solution to the ensuing problem since its buses do not reach all areas. However, Hababeh said, the PTC will Monday announce a new timetable for its buses along various routes in and around the capital so that people can make their transportation arrangements accordingly. But he added, the PTC plan is subject to amendments, depending on the density of travellers along various routes, and amendments could take place one week after the new regulations had gone into effect.

Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat told Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday that he received numerous complaints by members of the public about the new government regulations concerning the private cars, and said that ample preparations like holding seminars and spreading awareness among the people should have preceded the announcement.

Arabiyat said that an amendment to the government regulations could be introduced before they go into force.

The majority of those interviewed by the press over the past three days and those interviewed by Jordan Television voiced disapproval of the new measures because many said they had no alternative to using their own cars to go about. A radio morning phone-in programme received hundreds of calls from people expressing their concern about how to get to work, to reach home or take their children to school and so forth.

Tokyo, a Japanese embassy official said that the embassy in Amman had no information about the Japanese government decision.

According to the AP report the Japanese delegation members were assured by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Saturday that the Kingdom would allow Japanese planes to land and pick up evacuees escaping from the Gulf war zone.

Last week, four Japanese government chartered Japan Airlines planes evacuated 963 Vietnamese refugees and 82 Thais from Cairo, where they had been transported from Jordan.

The deployment of the air crews would involve the first dispatch of Japanese troops abroad since the end of World War II. Critics say it would violate Japan's postwar constitution, which bans war as a means of settling international disputes.

Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu had proposed sending troops for non-combat duties with the multinational forces fighting Iraq, but abandoned the plan amid strong opposition.

Kaifu pledged to send five C-130H planes for refugee transport as part of a package including \$9 billion for the allied forces battling Iraq.

Jordanian mothers hail Chevenement

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A group of active Jordanian mothers, calling for a peaceful settlement to the war in the region, have sent a cable to French Defence Minister Jean Pierre Chevenement congratulating him for taking a "noble stand" towards the war in the Gulf.

The French minister had resigned on Jan. 29, after French warplanes carried out two bombing raids on Iraq. He had repeatedly said France's mission should be the liberation of Kuwait, as specified in a United Nations Security Council resolutions, and not the destruction of Iraq. In his letter of resignation, Mr. Chevenement wrote: "a certain idea of the republic leads me to ask you to discharge me of the

functions for which it was an honour for me to carry out."

The following is the full text of the telegram sent to Mr. Chevenement:

His Excellency Jean Pierre Chevenement,
Your excellency, your resignation has expressed to the whole world the civilised and cultured France that we all know through its history and revolution that ushered in the world the principles of modern-day civilisation: Fraternity, liberty, and equality; France that gave to the whole world great leaders throughout the century. Your noble stand puts you in the rank of these great of your country.

We, the Jordanian mothers send you our deepest feeling of appreciation and respect for this honourable stand.

Jailoui visits Irbid

IRBID (Petra) — Health Minister Adnan Jailoui Sunday visited Irbid and inspected the city's hospital and a number of health centres.

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily says that as a result of the government decision to allow private cars to run on alternate days, a real confusion was created among Jordanians. Of course it is understood that the government's decision was aimed at reducing public traffic but consumption under the present difficult circumstances, but the majority of people are going to suffer as a result because there was no due consideration or ample time given to such decision as many people have been saying Salah Abdul Samad notes. He says that the government should realize that it is the people who decide whether any given order can succeed or fail, depending on the response it receives; and as long as the majority are against such measure since they can find no alternative to using their own cars as there is no regular public transport system to function in all regions, the government ought to re-consider the order and opt for other effective measures, the writer points out. He says that rationing the petrol through coupons like the milk, sugar and rice, and a campaign through the media and information services urging people to cut expenses in fuel, food, clothing and other items, would be a more realistic and carefully-studied situation and a wiser decision, the writer says, as by all means prompt the Jordanian public to accept the call for rationing if it is done in a manner that would not deeply hurt the normal social life of people.

struction of colonialism in Arab land and thus the destruction of colonialism everywhere ... Palestine must be liberated, but without a struggle, there will be no liberation ... to confront Israel we must confront imperialism, which both brought Israel into this region and sustained it. Therefore, to liberate Palestine we must always consid-

Saddam was quoted as previously saying to his comrades: "Nasser's mistake was that he expanded his region before he strengthened his country ... before he strengthened his internal front and the pan-Arab national thinking among the people and before building strong institutions inside Egypt."

Saddam's initiative to concentrate his efforts inside Iraq was the main reason for thinking of the model of Ba'athism. In one of his books on the Ba'ath ideology, Aflaq wrote: "if our aim is taking power is to build up the internal front in any Arab region, then I am against taking power. But if our aim is to establish Arab unity and liberate Palestine, then we should take power."

At the end of his life, Aflaq completely surrendered to Saddam's leadership. In one of his last speeches, Aflaq said: "Saddam is God's gift to Iraq and the Iraqi gift to the Arab nation."

American peace activist Ramsey Clark arrived in Baghdad Sunday and met with Foreign Ministry officials.

It cited reports as saying that "an atmosphere of frustration and failure prevails among off-

Mesopotamia, cauldron of war for thousands of years

By Ed Blanche
The Associated Press

NICOSIA, Cyprus — Mesopotamia, the fertile region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers that became the heart of modern Iraq, has been a battleground for more than 5,000 years.

One empire replaced another as the fabled "land between the rivers" was gripped for centuries in a seemingly endless cycle of conquest and rebellion.

The fates of civilizations turned on the high-tech weapons of their day: the chariot, bronze ax, the bow and arrow and iron-bladed spear. Now, Iraq battles sophisticated missiles and supersonic jets carrying laser-guided "smart" bombs.

Mesopotamia was the proving ground for arms and tactics that dominated warfare for hundreds of years. Saddam's role models are its mighty kings, whose victories he invokes in claiming their mantle.

The Sumerians, a now-extinct race, founded a chain of city-states around 3,500 B.C. in what is now southern Iraq and united about 1,000 years later to become the first regional superpower.

They introduced bronze weapons and were using chariots long before the Egyptians perfected them as the fast-moving ancient equivalent of modern armor.

Sumerian chariots were cumbersome, four-wheeled vehicles drawn by four asses. Their top speed probably was about 24 kilometers an hour and, since no one had invented a swiveling front axle, they could turn only in very wide arcs.

Chariots were used primarily to crush through columns of infantry, carrying spearmen who stabbed holes in enemy ranks.

The Sumerians pioneered the phalanx, a tight column of infantrymen in goat-hair kilts who advanced, according to ancient carvings, in six files of 11 men each.

In about 2,350 B.C., the Sumerians met their match in an enemy that had developed a new long-range weapon — the bow and arrow, the equivalent in its day of "stand-off" missiles that warplanes launch miles from their targets.

Archers fighting for the Akkadians, whose empire centered on the city of Akkad somewhere north of present-day Baghdad, neutralized the Sumerian army's supremacy.

Babylon came to dominate the region in the 18th century B.C. King Hammurabi conquered most of Mesopotamia with an army of 50,000 men, a huge force for the time. It included Chaldeans from the desert and Elamites from that is now Khuzestan, Iran's oil-rich southwestern province.

Citizen soldiers made up most armies in those days, but like Saddam with his elite Republican Guard, Hammurabi had a crack force of about 1,000 royal guards.

His army had cavalry, chariots and infantry. The cavalrymen, renowned as mounted archers, were the most effective.

For much of their ascendancy, the Babylonians were threatened by the Assyrians from the north, whose soldiers wore heavy armor.

In 818 B.C., the Assyrians triumphed at Dur-Papsukal. Contemporary accounts said the Babylonians, Chaldeans and Elamites lost 13,000 killed and 3,000 captives.

The Assyrians introduced iron weapons and heavy iron armor that was far more effective than the padded hides most soldiers used for protection. The empire was extended to the Mediterranean.

Shalmaneser III, with 120,000 men, defeated the Hittites in the battle of Qarqar in 853. The Assyrians fielded 1,100 chariots and 11,000 cavalrymen against the Hittites' 700 chariots and 700 cavalry in a fast-moving forerunner of today's tank battles.

Not until the battle of Khalule in 690 B.C. did the Assyrians finally crush the Babylonians. The victors claimed their enemies lost 150,000 killed.

Assyrian power, centered on Nineveh in what is now northern Iraq, ruled supreme until the resurgent Babylonians and their allies, the Medes of what is now Iran, sacked Nineveh in 612 B.C. Babylon flourished again under King Nebuchadnezzar and his armies destroyed Jerusalem. That empire lasted until the Persians sacked Babylon in the next century.

Eventually, the Assyrians were virtually wiped out. So fierce was the revenge of those they had brutally subjugated that most traces of the Assyrian civilization were destroyed.

Alexander the Great and his Macedonians sacked Babylon in 331 B.C., then went to India, forming a great empire stretching from Libya to the Punjab.

He returned to Babylon, planning to invade Arabia, but died of malaria in 323 B.C. at age 32. His empire collapsed, torn apart by feuding generals.

After Alexander, the Romans and the Byzantines tried to move in to Mesopotamia, but were held at bay by the Sassanids.

In 637, the Arabs triumphed, fired by the new religion of Islam. They were followed by the Ottoman Turks, and finally the British. Now, once again, the land is swept by war.

The not so secret 'secret killers'

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuter

BRUSSELS — Moving silently, often by night, they are among the best-kept secrets of the Gulf war.

Known as "special forces," the small American and British elite units are trained to kill with their bare hands, a knife or the latest sniper's rifle.

Their reputation for sabotage and striking deep behind enemy lines is legendary. They can dive underwater and parachute towards their targets. Stealth is the watchword for these real-life Ramboes.

"They will take risks others won't, they're trained to a higher standard than anyone else and they are specialists in the precise application of military force to maximum effect," said one defence source with knowledge of their operations.

Getting military authorities to talk publicly about the activities of units like Britain's Special Air Service (SAS) or the U.S. Navy "seals" in the Gulf war is virtually impossible, although it is known they have been deployed in the region.

Another source familiar with their operations said they would play a key role, slipping behind Iraqi lines to knock out command centres or missile sites, kill enemy commanders or gather intelligence.

The source said the reported defection of six Iraqi helicopters recently, subsequently denied by the Pentagon and Saudi authorities, could have been linked to a special forces raid to capture a surface-to-air missile from Kuwait.

Four days before war broke out, Britain's Sunday Times newspaper said a helicopter raid by American and British special forces had netted a missile and prisoners.

"There may well have been helicopters coming over the border into Saudi Arabia with enemy prisoners," said the source. "Someone may have jumped to conclusions that they were Iraqi choppers. They may well have been special forces coming back."

"Secret armies" have played an important role in fighting guerrilla organisations or in freeing hostages. Britain's SAS is locked in an often bloody undercover war with the Irish Republican Army which is trying to end British rule in Northern Ireland.

Special forces are in demand in wartime, when they reach their targets in rubber dinghies, low-flying helicopters or through parachute drops.

They try to sow fear and panic by disrupting operations in areas the enemy thinks safe.

Apart from the SAS, Britain has also sent elements of the Special Boat Squadron (SBS), a unit drawn from the ranks of the Royal Marines, to the Gulf. U.S. special forces in the region include Delta Force, the Green Berets and the Navy Seals.

Although the organisation, training and equipment of these units vary, they all have much in common — not least that their members are tougher and fitter than most other men under arms.

Selection courses lasting weeks or months test candidates to the

limit of their physical and mental endurance. Failure rates of between 50 and 80 per cent are common for all special forces' applicants, who are already successful professional soldiers.

Assault courses gruelling forced marches carrying heavy equipment are followed by searching psychological examinations.

The successful few have to learn a wide variety of dangerous or highly complex techniques. These usually include:

— Making a parachute landing from just 160 metres above the ground

— Diving with special oxygen tanks that leave no tell-tale trail of bubbles on the surface

— Disabling or killing an opponent silently, with no weapons

— Perfecting special language skills for certain areas of the world. At least some of the special forces operating in the Gulf will have members who speak Arabic

— Using and maintaining specialised weapons and communications equipment, some involving satellite technology

— Using explosives and other sabotage equipment. These even include small nuclear weapons, known as "backpack nukes."

How to survive in enemy territory, often for days or weeks at a time. Survival skills cover any terrain from thick jungle to arctic wastes and include bizarre techniques like how to cook and eat ants, or make soap from wood ash and fat.

Unit sizes vary. Members of special teams must be skilled improvisers and able to operate independently.

"Innate intelligence, physical strength, agility, stamina and standard training are not enough," wrote John Collins, U.S. author of a recent book on special forces.

Much of the formal relationship between ranks disappears in these units, whose members learn to rely on each other totally for survival.

The weapons they carry depend on their missions, but usually they must be small and light. Much favoured is the small Heckler and Koep sub-machinegun. Snipers' rifles carry the latest in laser and night sighting equipment.

Some of the more exotic equipment includes mini-submarines, poisons that make death look natural and have no known antidotes, radios that self-destruct and armour-piercing ammunition for ordinary handguns.

Britain's SAS — father of all modern special forces — was set up in 1941 to strike deep behind German lines in the North African desert.

One of its most-decorated members, General Sir Peter de la Billiere, is now commanding British forces in the Gulf.

Its members usually work in teams of four. The last known SAS military operation took place during the 1982 Falklands war, when a unit slipped onto an island at night and destroyed 11 Argentine aircraft parked on a runway.

U.S. special forces, used in the Vietnam war, were reorganised following the disastrous 1980 attempt to rescue hostages held in Iran by helicopter.

Engineers, vipers and dustbins hold key to tough Iraqi defences!!

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuter

BRUSSELS — Watch out for "giant vipers" and "flying dustbins" — they may soon be Gulf war terms as familiar as the Patriot and Scud missiles streaking through the night sky.

The oddly-named devices are expected to play a major role as U.S.-led forces try to push Iraqi troops out of Kuwait.

Along with bundles of plastic and long sticks, they are part of the resolutely "low-tech" arsenals that assault engineers will deploy to clear the way for attacks by allied ground forces.

The engineers must brave huge sandbanks, ditches filled with burning oil, minefields, barbed wire and bunkers to clear a path — probably under fire all the time.

"It is very much the sharp end of the fighting," said one officer with more than 30 years of service in Britain's Royal Engineers.

"Casualty rates are high among engineers."

The obstacles are designed to slow the allied advance and channel their forces into "killing zones" where Iraqi troops and guns can concentrate their fire.

Which is where the giant vipers and the flying dustbins come in.

The first of these is a coiled tube filled with explosives, used for clearing a path through minefields. Launched from a truck by rockets, it looks like a snake with a large head as it uncoils — hence the name.

As it lands on the minefield, it detonates, exploding all mines for about one yard (metre) on either side of the tube.

The "flying dustbin" is basically a large high-explosive charge, hurled by the 165mm demolition gun mounted on one type of engineering vehicle. It can be used to clear a hole in barbed wire, blast an enemy bunker or flatten a building.

Some of the engineers' work can be done from the relative safety of armoured vehicles, most of them adapted from the hulls of main battle tanks.

These can be fitted with "dozer blades" to clear rubble or obstacles, or with a flail or plough system that will detonate mines in their path.

Some can carry bundles of wood or plastic that are dropped into ditches and allow other vehicles to cross. Still others carry folding bridges on top, that can be stretched across wider gaps in a matter of minutes.

There are fully-tracked tractors that can "swim" across rivers and be used for excavation work or as fork-lift trucks.

Huge armoured recovery vehicles, with powerful cranes and pulleys, can help move damaged tanks out of harm's way.

To give their crews some cover from enemy fire, many of these vehicles are fitted with discharg-

ers that fire smoke grenades in front.

But, in the end, the engineers — or sappers as they are sometimes called — still have to do some of their work on foot, out in the open and unprotected.

They check minefields thoroughly, often using long sticks to prod the ground or even the blade of a knife to scrape the sand away from a mine. They may have to clear cunning "booby traps" left by enemy forces in abandoned built-up areas.

And they must often improvise as they clear the way for the real battle to begin.

One of the best examples comes from the 1973 Egyptian attack on Israeli forces at the eastern edge of the Suez Canal.

The Israelis had built a line of forts and a huge, continuous earthwork, posing major problems for Cairo's military planners — until a young engineer officer had a bright idea.

LETTERS

Weird

To The Editor:

The new world order as envisioned by George Bush seems to be riddled with ironies, contradictions, absurdities, half-truths, biases, jokes, confusions and more ironies. In fact, George Bush should rename it the new world disorder. Allow me to list but a few pointers that come to mind, especially in light of the recent events in this part of our planet:

★ It is ironic that Jim Baker did not clear the recent joint U.S./Soviet declaration with his president.

★ It is pathetic how quick the White House issued an explanation (or should I call it apology?) to Israel.

★ It is a very clear bias that the U.S. would block a series of attempts at issuing U.N. resolutions perceived as critical of Israel, while it bulldozes through a whole series of resolutions condemning Iraq for contravening the same U.N. rules.

★ It is a sick joke to think of "civilised" German and Japan scurrying to oil the U.S. killing machine with well over \$20 billion in less than 3 months, while a group of caring entertainers had to bust their ... a few years ago in order to raise a paltry \$100 million to feed millions of starving Africans.

★ It is contradictory when one compares the reaction of the U.S. Administration to the inhuman treatment and massacres committed by Israel against Palestinians (naughty naughty) and the mass murder of Iraqi civilians by U.S. carpet bombing of cities.

★ It is utterly confusing to attempt to understand what the alliance really wants to achieve from its onslaught on Iraq. George Bush wants to liberate Kuwait while his pompous pawn John Major wants to eradicate the Iraqi might. Will you guys please get your act together?

★ It is ironic that Jordan was complimented by Mrs. Iron Pants on its U.N. stand on the Falklands issue, while it is being sequestered for standing firm on the very same issue, the non-admissibility of occupation of another country's territory by war.

Claire de la Plume.

The following letter was delivered to ambassadors of nations participating in the Gulf war. A copy was made available to the Jordan Times.

Peace be upon you.

For us, as for most of the honest and peace-loving populations of this globe, the U.N. came as an embodiment of our dream of world peace after two destructive wars.

The principles upon which the U.N. charter was based, principles also emphasised in the international women's decade, were peace, development and equality. These principles are deeply rooted in our Arab culture and Islamic religion. This is why the women of Jordan, have always joined hands with the U.N. in an attempt to realise these principles in real practical measures. We believed that this was

also the route to achieve our national goals of freedom and sovereignty which begins by solving the main Arab cause, namely, the Palestinian issue. For many decades, and in good faith, we have constantly found excuses for the delay in implementing your resolutions concerning these issues. Now that we have seen how fast the U.N. has moved to implement resolutions, not of peace and development but of embargo on food and medicine, and of war against Iraq, we question the third principle raised by the U.N., that of equality among individuals and nations.

Despite our disappointment in the U.N. stands, we will continue to serve the principles of peace, development and equality the way our Prophet preached when he said: "Don't seek your enemies to fulfil a desire for killing, but if you have to face them fight as long as it takes because heaven lies under the shadow of swords."

Fight we will, but we hoped we would never have to find aggressors blessed and supported by the U.N. and its Security Council, because this means that there is no real security in the whole world.

Arab women graduates club,
Amman, Jordan.

The following letter was sent to Congress, House of Commons, Lords Green Peace, and the Council of Churches.

We appeal

"Blessed are the peace-makers for they shall be called children of God." Mat: 5:9

For the past ten days, the world has witnessed one of the most devastating wars in history take place in the Gulf involving millions of people both military and civilian. This onslaught cannot be allowed to continue, it must be stopped.

The land of Iraq is crowded with historic and cultural sites that have contributed so much to civilisation from UR of the Chaldeans to Baghdad of the Abbasids. The irreparable destruction of such sites (the historic church of Mar-Thoma (St. Thomas), is a sad comment on modern man's repayment of the debt we all owe to Mesopotamia.

Ecologically, the damages cannot be assessed. Casualties from the longer-term impact of blazing oil-wells and chemical plants, and the destruction of living conditions, infrastructure, and resources in the Middle East are likely to exceed immediate war-casualties. Damage and human suffering can neither be reversed by financial compensation.

Green Peace recently released figures showing that there are around 400 nuclear warheads deployed on British, French Soviet and U.S. ships in the Gulf. As mothers, we are extremely concerned that in the event casualties start becoming unacceptable to the coalition forces they might resort to the use of nuclear weapons against Iraq to end the war.

We appeal to you and remind you that real victories are those that protect human life, not those that result from its destruction or emerge from its ashes.

Jordanian Mothers,
P.O. Box 8431,
Amman, Jordan.

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Jordan Times

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

Sabatini beats Navratilova to win Pan-Pacific indoor title

TOKYO (AP) — Argentina's Gabriela Sabatini defeated Martina Navratilova in full sets Sunday and won the Pan Pacific Open Tennis Tournament.

Sabatini, seeded fifth, overcame erratic serving in the first set to overpower third-seeded Navratilova 2-6, 6-2, 6-4.

In the doubles finals, Elizabeth Smylie of Australia and Kathy Jordan of the United States came behind to defeat Americans Mary Jo Fernandez and Robin White 1-6, 6-0, 6-3.

"It's a wonderful feeling," said Sabatini, who had defeated Steffi Graf, the world's top-ranked female player, in the quarterfinals.

"I've been playing well here all week," she said.

Still, the Argentinian admitted her Sunday performance had its uneven spots.

"I wasn't serving well, so I didn't have a lot of confidence there. But I think my return today was excellent and my passing shots were very good," she said.

Navratilova, coming back from a three-month blank after having surgery on both knees, breezed through the first five games of the match as Sabatini struggled to adjust her serve.

But Sabatini, who had seven double faults to none for Navratilova, began the second set with an ace and went on to win the next three games.

Though Navratilova broke Sabatini's serve in the third set's first game, the 34-year-old veteran allowed her own service to be broken in the sixth and again in the eighth, which she had led 40-0.

"She returned extremely well," Navratilova said. "But my serve doesn't have the pace or spin on it that it used to have."

Navratilova had won all but three of her previous 16 matches against Sabatini, who is ranked fourth in the world.

"I came tantalizingly close to winning the match, and couldn't quite pull it off," she said. "But I just came back from an operation so I wouldn't make any conclusions from this tournament."

Sabatini takes home \$70,000 for the win.

Navratilova praised her younger opponent. "She played better and better in the second set. I raised my game in the final set but she had good shots and winners when she needed it," she said.

Navratilova won the 1988 Wimbledon title.

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Gabriela Sabatini is poised for service action on her way to victory.

Svigerova wins Auckland Classic

AUCKLAND, New Zealand (AP) — Eva Svigerova outlasted Andrea Strnadova in a three-set final Sunday to win the \$10,000 Nutri-Metics Classic Tennis Tournament.

Svigerova, ranked 89th in the world, won the all-Zecheoslovak final 6-2, 0-6, 6-1. She had beaten no. 2 seeded Argentine Mercedes Paz in the semifinals.

Strnadova, 18, a two-time junior Wimbledon champion ranked 125th in the world, had not dropped a set going in to the final but Svigerova played steadier tennis.

The title was the first for Svigerova, 19, in her three-year professional career.

She earned \$18,000 for her victory, while qualifier Strnadova collected \$8,500.

Svigerova improved her record against Strnadova to 3-2.

Both players will also compete in the \$100,000 Fernleaf Classic, which begins Monday in Wellington. Soviet player Lela Meshki is the top seed for that event.

Chelsea shatters Arsenal's unbeaten league record

LONDON (R) — Arsenal's George Graham never expected his team to remain unbeaten for 23 league matches, so when they lost Saturday he could still manage a smile.

"All good things have to end. We have had our setbacks before and we will bounce back again," he said after the English League leaders lost 2-1 to Chelsea at Stamford Bridge.

A win would have sent Arsenal four points clear, albeit briefly, but they still stayed top of the table, one point ahead of champions Liverpool who now have two games in hand.

Crystal Palace are third, three points off the pace.

"If someone had told me before the season started that our first league defeat would be in February, then I would have said 'thank you very much,'" the

Arsenal manager smiled. But he was nonetheless disappointed that it should be fellow-Londoners Chelsea who had triumphed where other, possibly more talented or deserving, first division sides had failed.

Manchester United are the only other team to have beaten Arsenal this season, thrashing them 6-2 in a League Cup tie, but United are on song whereas Chelsea have been uneven of late.

"There have been other matches ... when we were under the cosh and were lucky to survive but today we could have got something," Graham said, while making no excuses — despite two lively F.A. Cup matches in four days against Leeds.

But Chelsea manager Bobby Campbell, delighted to see his club wiping out the memory of

their 4-1 defeat at Highbury last September, had only one name on his lips afterwards.

Graham Stuart, a 20-year-old former trainee and an ex-alumnus of the Football Association school of excellence, was the star after scoring in his debut as a striker. His 67th minute goal broke the deadlock and sent Chelsea on their way.

Before Saturday, Stuart had played only as a midfielder but, with Scotland's Gordon Durie suspended, Campbell decided the time was ripe to try him in attack.

"Call it an educated guess, but I think everyone is in for a treat," he had said.

The guess proved to be inspired as Stuart positioned himself expertly to bang in an unanswerable close range header.

"I had to make sure I got in on target or the boss would have killed me. Everyone at the club would have killed me," he said of what was only his third goal in the senior team.

England international Kerry Dixon tapped home an easy goal two minutes from time when Damian Matthew wrong-footed Arsenal goalkeeper David Seaman and put in the cross. Alan Smith scored a consolation goal

for Arsenal in the final seconds.

Crested Palace, knocked out of the F.A. Cup by Nottingham Forest Monday, returned to the club for their fourth meeting in three weeks and exacted their revenge with a 1-0 win.

But it was still a close run match, with defender Eric Young only heading in the goal with four minutes remaining.

Meanwhile, at the bottom of the division, a flurry of goals handed struggling Sheffield United a result that even their most ardent fans would previously have considered improbable.

United scored four in the first 29 minutes to beat Southampton 4-1 and, with Derby losing 3-2 at Aston Villa, moved off the bottom of the table for the first time this season.

In Scotland, leaders Rangers had their match at St Johnstone postponed, while second-placed Aberdeen closed the gap to five points with a 5-0 thrashing at home against Hearts.

Hearts were a goal down in the first minute and suffered another blow three minutes later when the Scotland international striker John Robertson went off with a badly cut forehead which needed six stitches.

Barcelona battles to draw in mudbath at Valencia

VALENCIA (R) — Spanish league leaders Barcelona battled to a 2-2 draw away to Valencia in a match played in torrential rain on a pitch where water sprayed freely at every step.

The appalling conditions robbed the match of skill but not of excitement as Valencia twice took the lead only for Barcelona to peg them back each time.

With players sliding in all directions and the ball stopping dead unless lifted well off the ground, Barcelona contrived to look slightly less comical than Valencia in the early stages.

But the mood changed in the 34th minute when Valencia midfielder Roberto Fernandez brought down the curtain on a ballet scene in the Barcelona penalty area by sliding a close

range shot past goalkeeper Andoni Zubizarreta.

The league leaders were level within five minutes thanks to a brilliant solo effort from Danish international Michael Laudrup, who cut in from the left and crashed home a 20-metre, left foot drive.

The home side went ahead again in the 50th minute, Bulgarian Luboslav Penev scoring from the penalty spot after Eloy Olaya was submerged in the area by Miguel Soler.

Barcelona struck back once more in the 67th minute when 19-year-old Antonio Pinilla, who had come on seven minutes earlier for Aitor Beguiristain, spun like a top to leave the Valencia defence floundering and slotted in the equaliser.

No quick end seen to S. Africa sports sanctions

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand's cricket chief said Sunday he wanted South Africa to return to the international game but was cautious about Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke's forecast that sporting sanctions could end next year.

"While we would be happy to see South Africa back in international cricket... personally I don't imagine that we would rush into anything at this stage," Peter McDermott, chairman, of New Zealand Cricket, told Reuters.

Hawke said Saturday the Commonwealth should immediately start phasing out sanctions following President F.W. De Klerk's promise to scrap remaining apartheid laws.

McDermott said New Zealand cricket would have to follow the government line. "We have to abide by the laws of the land, so that means whatever the government decrees," he said.

"We would also obey the rules of the ICC (International Cricket Council), which stated recently its position concerning South Africa hadn't changed."

Prime Minister Jim Bolger, who starts a three-day visit to Australia Monday, has been more cautious than Hawke in reacting to De Klerk's promises, made Friday.

"I hope that these announced measures, when carried into practice, will speed the integration of sporting codes in South Africa so normal sporting relations could be resumed," he said in a statement issued Saturday. "But that will depend on the pace of change in the republic."

South Africa is set to be a major issue when Bolger meets Hawke Monday for their first face-to-face talks since he became New Zealand leader last November.

Meanwhile two leading South African sports officials said Sunday their country's readmission to international sport may take some time.

Austrian retains title at World Skiing Championships

SAALBACH-HINTERGLEMM, Austria (AP) — Rudolf Nierlich of Austria successfully defended his world title in the men's giant slalom Sunday as first-run leader Alberto Tomba fell near the top of the course.

Urs Kaelin of Switzerland won the medal and Johan Wallner of Sweden took the bronze in the final event of the two-week World Alpine Skiing Championships.

However, an official protest was filed against Nierlich by several teams because of an apparent problem with his racing suit. A small seal that is required on all racers' overalls was missing from Nierlich's outfit at the end of the first run.

The Italian and other teams protested, seeking the Austrian's disqualification, but officials allowed Nierlich to run in the second heat.

Officials of the International Ski Federation (FIS) were meeting Sunday afternoon to rule on the protest, but the Italians said they did not expect Nierlich to be disqualified. The Italians said Nierlich may have lost the seal during the first run.

The seal is used to prove that each racer's suit has been approved by FIS.

"I must have lost it during the race," Nierlich said. But Tomba, whose chances for his first world title ended when he

fell at the eighth gate, said he was bitter that Nierlich was allowed to participate in the second heat.

"If he were an Italian, he would have been disqualified for sure," said the outspoken Italian.

Nierlich, who hit a gate near the bottom of the second run but managed to stay on his skis, had a winning aggregate time of 2 minutes, 29.94 seconds.

"It went for me, even with the mistake I made," said Nierlich. Kaelin's time was 2:30.29 and Wallner finished in 2:30.73.

Tomba, the reigning Olympic champion, had the best time on the first run but again failed in his quest for a world title. He has been the top giant slalom racer in the world this year.

Nierlich's victory was the fifth for Austria at the 10-race championships, and the 11th medal for the host team. The Swiss finished with six medals, while no other nation had more than three.

Tomba had the fastest time on the first run with 1:16.16, a quarter of a second faster than the 1:16.73 of Nierlich. Kaelin, who was fifth fastest on the first run, had the best time of 1:12.70 on the second heat.

Jeremy Nobis, an American who had the 10th-best time on the first run, had a very fast time at the intermediate split on the second run but stumbled near the bottom and failed to finish the second heat.

Japanese challenger knocks out Argentine boxing champ

MAGOYA, Japan (AP) — Japanese challenger Kiyoshi Hatanaka stopped Pedro Decima of Argentina in the eighth round Sunday and took away his World Boxing Council (WBC) super bantamweight title.

Referee Rube Garcia of Mexico stopped the fight at the end of the eighth round after Hatanaka floored Decima with a left hook for the sixth knockdown in the scheduled 12-round bout at Nagoya Exhibition Hall.

Decima started strongly, knocking down Hatanaka with a left and right combination 2:43 into the first round.

The 23-year-old Hatanaka, however, gained his rhythm and the two exchanged blows fiercely.

Hatanaka downed Decima 1:17 into the fourth round with a right straight and then floored the champion three more times in the same round — with a left hook, a right straight and

another left hook.

The Japanese also knocked a groggy Decima down in the seventh.

It was the 26-year-old Decima's first attempted defence of the title he took from Paul Banke of the United States by a knockout last Nov. 5.

Hatanaka, one of Japan's two world champions, improved his record to 22 victories, including 15 by knockout, against one loss and one draw, while Decima dropped to 26-3 with 18 knockouts.

Japan's other world champion is World Boxing Association flyweight Yukihito "Leopard" Tamakuma.

Boxing commentators said Decima had problems with his weight.

Decima weighed in at 55.2 kilograms (121.5 pounds) on his first try, under the division's 55.34-kilogram (122-pound) limit.

Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts

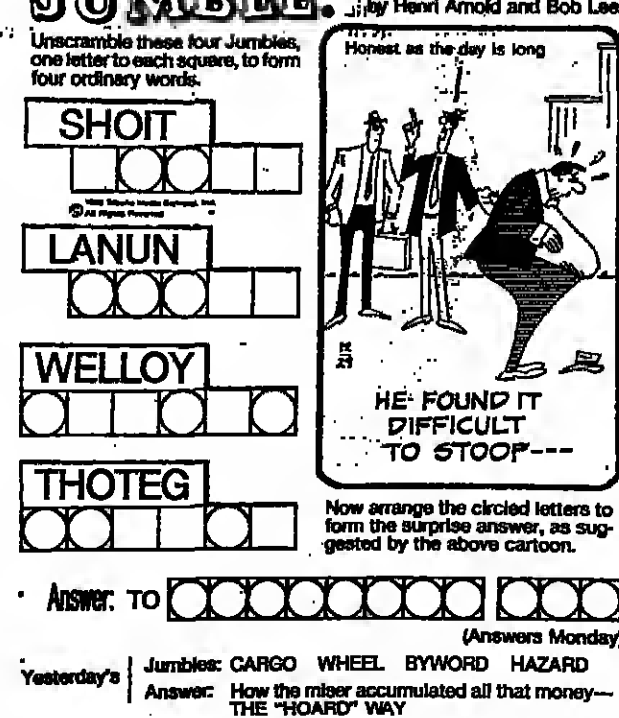


Horoscope not received

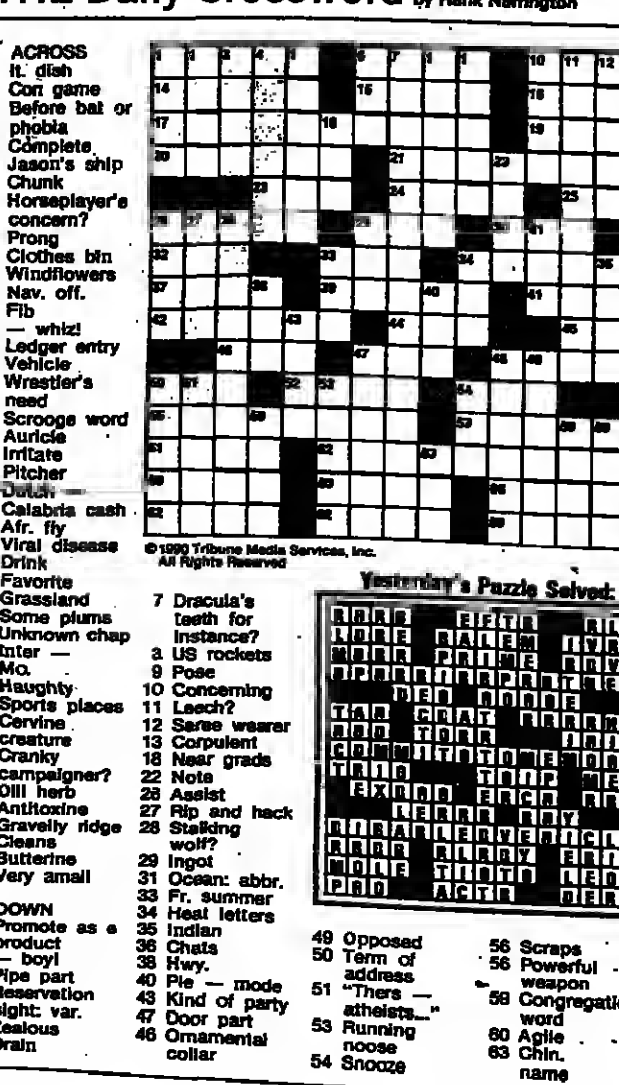
THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME



THE Daily Crossword by Hank Harrington



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNIA HIRSCH
© 1990 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

NOT WORTH PLAYING

Both vulnerable. East deals.
NORTH
♠ K J 10 9 8 3 2
♥ V
♦ A Q 8
♣ A J 10
WEST
♠ V
♥ 10 9 7 6 3
♦ 10 9 7 6
♣ 9 8 7 3
EAST
♠ A K J 8 5 2
♥ K J 2
♦ K J 2
♣ 5 4 2

SOUTH
♠ A Q 6 5 4
♥ Q 4
♦ 5 4 3
♣ K Q 6

The bidding:
East South West North
1 ♠ 1 ♠ Pass 6 ♠
Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♣
What's your simplest way to 12 tricks on this hand after West leads a heart? Against understanding opponents, just claim your slam. If not, be careful to avoid the line chosen by our declarer.

North was somewhat surprised to hear South overcall the one-heart opening bid with one spade. Since opener rated to have one of the minor-suit kings, North was content to boost the contract to six spades via the shortest route possible.

West led the ten of hearts, ruffed

in dummy.

Gulf war empties Rome of tourists

ROME (R) — The taxis tell the story.

In a city where finding one is often a combination of strategy and luck, they now languish empty in yellow clusters in front of hotels, restaurants and monuments.

"I can't remember a time this bad in the 23 years I've been driving a taxi," said Goffredo Parboni as he waited in vain with four other colleagues for a passenger just a few steps from the Trevi Fountain, usually a tourist magnet.

"At night, it's as if there's a curfew. There's hardly anyone in the hotels and everybody's afraid of going out."

The Gulf war, combined with the off season, has virtually emptied Rome of tourists. But Romans are in no mood to take advantage of the new-found emptiness.

Fearing a terrorist attack in reprisal for Italy's role in the anti-Iraq alliance, Romans are staying close to home.

Throughout the city, restaurants, shops, cinemas and discotheques are reporting one of their worst seasons ever.

Hotel occupancy rates are off by as much as 50 per cent.

A special parking lane for tourist coaches near the Roman Forum and the Colosseum was empty last week.

Many school carnival season parties and outings to museums have been cancelled. Police guard foreign schools and, at some, children have been told not to wear uniforms.

"People feel gloomy and afraid about what is going on and this has affected their way of life," said Maria Ferrari, a Rome office worker.

"We Italians have lived through war and we have lived through terrorism. We know both and that is perhaps why the mood of the city is so grim," she said.

Many Romans like her have rented more videos to watch at home so their children won't have to go to the movies. At smart clubs, receptions have been cancelled.

"People are just afraid of congregating," said the head waiter at one of them.

In the 1970s and 1980s Italy was the scene of numerous attacks by Italian and Middle Eastern guerrillas.

Italians and foreigners are still haunted by the Dec. 27, 1985 Palestinian attack at Rome airport which killed 16 people.

Since the Gulf war erupted on Jan. 17, Italian police and military have been on alert for guerrilla activity. High-profile security is visible throughout the capital.

Near the Spanish steps a grey armoured personnel vehicle and policemen with machine-guns protect the American Express office.

Their equally well-armed colleagues patrol the Via Veneto area where the U.S. embassy and major airline offices are located. Police cars are parked in front of hotels.

"Apart from those who work here, no one is coming to the centre to shop during the day and the place is dead after 8 p.m. No one is coming in to eat," said Corrado Lunetti, who runs a women's boutique on the Chic Via Frattina.

He said his business was off by 70 per cent since the start of the war, despite the traditional January sales period.

The Italian Travel Agents' Federation has approached the government for help, saying massive layoffs are inevitable if the drop in bookings continues.

Car hire firms report business is off by 80 per cent.

The Americans have virtually disappeared from Rome and the Europeans are not far behind. There are only a few Japanese left," said an official of the National Hoteliers Association.

Things are no better at other favourite tourist haunts.

In Venice, where fears of a guerrilla attack led the town council to cancel this year's carnival, the first thing travellers see on landing at the airport is a machinegun post protected by sandbags.

Israel stops sale of third largest bank

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel suspended talks about the sale of its third largest bank Saturday, two days after the central bank urged the government not to sell it to its ousted owner who faces trial in a shares scandal.

The treasury said Finance Minister Yitzhak Mordechai ordered an indefinite postponement of negotiations with investors headed by Raphael Recanatani for the state-owned IDB Bankholding Corp.

The only other bidder for IDB was disqualified.

Bank of Israel Governor Michael Bruno said Thursday it was not "suitable" to let Recanatani repurchase IDB, a banking group built around Israel Discount Bank.

The central bank must approve any bank sale.

Recanatani and 16 other senior Israeli bankers were indicted last month for fraud. They are accused of manipulating their own bank share prices in the early 1980s, causing them to rise above their real value.

Share prices collapsed in 1983, forcing the government to step in and buy them for more than \$3.5 billion.

Recanatani was stripped of control of IDB after a 1986 commission of inquiry. But his family still owns nearly 13 per cent of the group, which has assets worth \$15 billion.

If convicted, Recanatani would be blocked from regaining control of IDB because Israeli law bans anyone convicted of related felonies from owning more than 10 per cent in any bank.

IDB is the first of four Israeli banks due for sale in a privatisation programme to finance a mass influx of Soviet Jewish immigrants and reduce foreign debt.

National Bank of Bahrain raises profit by 12 per cent

BAHRAIN (R) — National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) island's largest commercial bank, said Sunday its net profit in 1990 rose to nine million dinars (\$24 million) from 8.1 million dinars (\$21 million) the previous year.

Operating income before provisions for bad debts fell slightly to 13.9 million dinars (\$36.9 million) last year from 14 million dinars (\$37 million) in 1989, the bank said in a statement.

Total assets dropped sharply to 605.8 million dinars (\$1.6 billion) at the end of 1990 from 660.6 million (\$1.75 billion) at the end of 1989.

Customer deposits fell to 446 million dinars (\$1.183 billion) from 466 million dinars (\$1.24 billion).

NBB Chairman Ahmad Ali Kanoo said the fall in the customers' deposits was marginal when compared with the capital flight from the Gulf after Iraq invaded Kuwait in August.

Iran approves \$307b budget

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian legislators have approved a budget 63 per cent higher than the current planned level based on about \$20 billion of oil revenue and \$4.8 billion of foreign credit for the year starting March 21.

Tehran radio said the bill, setting the general budget at 20.08 trillion rials — equivalent to \$307 billion at the official rate of 65.5 rials per dollar — became law after receiving final approval by the overseeing Guardian Council.

The overall figure is 63 per cent higher than the current year's planned level but some of the increase is due to a government decision last month to sell foreign exchange to businessmen at rates of up to 20 times the official parity.

The general budget is composed of two parts: About 60 per cent of it is the budget of state-owned companies which the government says will gradually be sold off, and the rest is the government budget.

The Iranian news agency IRNA said the government budget in the final version stood at 8.64 trillion rials — 54 per cent over the current year's figure — for a deficit of 1.34 trillion rials.

Some deputies criticised the budget, revised upwards twice in parliament, as unrealistic, inflationary and out of step with a five-year plan adopted only a year ago.

They said the oil revenue target, which the government says is based on a price \$18.4 a barrel, cannot be met in the current oil market, which is tied to the Gulf war.

President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said Iran planned to increase its oil output by 410,000 barrels per day (b/d) over the next year, enabling it to have 2.43 million b/d for export compared for 1.98 million b/d in the current year.

"In ideal conditions maybe we will earn \$16 billion from selling oil," said deputy Hossein Hosseini Shahrondi.

Another deputy said the selling of foreign exchange at higher rates was a fig leaf to cover the deficit and only fuelled inflation.

The policy, a key plank of Rafsanjani's plan for recovery after Iran's devastating war with Iraq, aims to generate 2.3 trillion rials — more than a quarter of government revenue in the coming year.

Iran's planning chief, Massoud Rahnghani Zanjani, defended the policy in parliament, saying market realities dictated the price of hard currency. "The price of the national currency cannot be set administratively or politically measures," he said.

Parliament excluded non-oil exports, which are mostly from the private sector and have been running at about a billion dollars in recent years, from the government budget.

The budget bill, in line with the five-year plan, allows the use of \$4.8 billion of foreign credit tied to a few dozen specific projects including textiles, edible oils and sugar, fiberglass and concrete pipes and motor oil additives.

The credits should be repaid by March 1995.

The government will spend \$2.7 billion on importing wheat, meat, rice, tea, fodder and chemical fertilisers, slightly more than the current year's projected level.

Among other foreign exchange allocations in the budget are: \$300 million for reconstruction of areas devastated by last June's earthquake, \$50 million for hospital equipment, \$70 million to boost meat and dairy industries, and \$670 million for electricity generation.

Deputies criticised the government for failing to meet tax revenue targets, but raised next year's level by about half to 3.32 trillion rials. But they authorised the government to beef up its taxation effort by five billion rials and 2,500 additional tax collectors.

Bush sends Congress \$1.4 trillion budget today

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. President George Bush will present a \$1.4 trillion budget proposal to Congress Monday, with war, recession and a new budget law the main influences on the document.

The budget for the 1992 fiscal year, starting Oct. 1, is not expected to contain any initiatives to lift the economy out of recession but to focus instead on long-term economic growth.

It will grapple with major uncertainties including the question of how much the Gulf war will cost.

"There's no way to tell reliably at this point," White House Budget Director Richard Darman told CBS television last week.

He said the budget merely included a \$15 billion place-holder until the true cost of the campaign to drive Iraq out of Kuwait is known.

Darman ruled out new taxes to pay for the war, meaning any costs to the United States will increase the deficit. He said the deficit will be \$318 billion for fiscal 1991 and \$281 billion for fiscal 1992.

The size of the deficit will be influenced by the length and depth of the recession, which was already biting hard before the Gulf crisis began.

Administration officials have predicted that the economy will turn around by mid-year. But that may prove optimistic if the war drags on.

"If you get (a war) beyond three months you begin to risk consumer confidence erosion and that would short any meaningful recovery," Federal Reserve (central bank) Board Chairman Alan Greenspan said in a New York Times interview last week.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office predicts the recession, sparked by excessive public and commercial borrowing that led to a partial collapse of the U.S. banking system, will end in the next few months.

It projects no economic growth at all this calendar year but sees the economy expanding 3.3 per cent in calendar 1992.

It paints a similar picture for unemployment, projecting a jump to 6.8 per cent this year and a 0.4 percentage point drop in 1992.

The jobless rate for January rose to 6.2 per cent, up from 6.1 per cent in December.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the costs of bailing out failed savings banks and covering other recession costs will jump to \$103 billion for fiscal 1991 and \$98 billion for fiscal 1992.

Bush is constrained by the spending limits set by a deficit reduction law which seeks to cut the deficit by \$482 billion over five years.

The 1992 defence budget will be limited to approximately \$291 billion. The costs of Operation Desert Storm in the Gulf are, however, being covered separately.

International programmes will be limited to about \$19 billion and domestic programmes to around \$208 billion.

Some proposed tax cuts shelved last year are expected to be revived in the new budget. In his State of the Union address last week Bush said he planned to include a reduction in taxes on capital gains from the sale of long-term assets.

Singapore tops world as busiest container port

SINGAPORE (AP) — Singapore became the world's busiest container port last year and also retained its position as the world's busiest harbour in terms of shipping tonnage.

Almost 45,000 ships, accounting for 484 million gross registered tonnes, called at this maritime crossroads in 1990, according to Port of Singapore Authority (PSA) figures.

"This is equivalent to every ship in the world tonnage-wise calling at Singapore once, as there are only 424 million (gross registered tonnes) of ships registered worldwide," said Communications Minister Yeo Ning Hong.

A vessel arrives or leaves every seven minutes and about 600 are in port at any one time, officials said.

The city-state has topped Rotterdam in tonnage since 1986 because — cargo requirements aside — thousands of ships call for competitively priced bunker fuel and repairs at four major yards.

Singapore outpaced Hong Kong in terms of containers for the first time by handling 5.22 million 20-foot equivalent units, or TEUs. The PSA said this was an increase of 20 per cent on the 4.36 million TEUs in 1989.

The British colony handled 51 million TEUs in 1990 and 4.46 million the previous year, a spokesman for Hong Kong's Marine Dept. said Tuesday.

Hong Kong was the world's busiest container port in terms of volume for the previous three years.

It is the principal port for good bound to and from southern China.

Both Hong Kong and Singapore are free ports. Singapore levies no import or export duties except on fuel, tobacco and a few other items. Foreign exchange controls are almost nonexistent, as are controls on the flow of capital and goods.

Yeo said Singapore recorded 188 million tonnes in total oil and non-oil cargo through last year, an eight per cent increase on 1989.

Singapore is also the world's third-largest refining centre, after Houston and Rotterdam. Its five refineries have a crude oil capacity of more than one million barrels per day.

Retailers and local authorities ignore Brazil's anti-inflation plan

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Many Brazilian retailers and some local governments are ignoring federal wage and price freeze to cool inflation and had marked up prices less than 48 hours after the plan was announced.

Confused consumers stayed away from stores as they pored over newspapers in an attempt to decipher the new measures imposed late Thursday by the government of President Fernando Collor de Mello. Banks also were

ordered closed Friday and are to reopen Monday.

Although prices were to be fixed at Jan. 30 levels, by Saturday many goods were already marked up. Some storeowners found other ways to get around the price freeze mandated under the so-called Collor Plan II.

Even the Rio and Sao Paulo city governments announced fare increases of up to 40 per cent for public transportation, sparking criticism from Economy Minister

Zelia Cardoso de Mello. She threatened to take the matter to court.

Collor de Mello's first anti-inflation plan, unveiled in March 1990, failed to control inflation despite freezing most of the country's wealth. Inflation in January was 20 per cent and is expected to climb to 23 per cent in February.

The new measures also eliminated daily and monthly treasury bond indicators commonly used as a means of indexing prices to inflation, ended speculative short-term money market accounts and raised fuel, electricity and telephone fees by 46 to 60 per cent.

In television and newspaper interviews, Cardoso said interest paid on bank accounts would be set by a market-established rate similar to the prime rate charged by U.S. banks. But few understand how this will work.

Storeowners, confused over how interest rates will be set, have stopped accepting credit cards.

There were many reports of retailers ignoring the price freeze. The Jornal do Brasil newspaper said that in one Rio store a television that had sold for slightly less than 100,000 cruzeiros (\$426) on Jan. 30 was priced at nearly 128,000 Friday.

A survey conducted by the Datafolha polling agency in Rio and Sao Paulo found that 52 per cent of those polled believe they will be worse off because of the plan and 49 per cent believe inflation will rise.

Collor appealed to Brazilians Saturday to help his government carry out a wage and price freeze announced Thursday.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES					
Sunday, February 3, 1991					
Central Bank official rates					
	Buy	Sell			
U.S. dollar	664.0	668.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	504.6	507.6
Pound Sterling	1311.4	1319.3	Dutch guilder	401.5	403.9
Deutschemark	452.2	454.9	Swedish crown	120.7	121.4
Swiss franc	530.3	533.5	Italian lira (for 100)	60.1	60.5
French franc	132.9	133.7	Belgian franc (for 10)	220.2	221.5

TODAY AT

Cinema **RAINBOW** Tel: 625155

Tom Cruise in **LOSIN' IT**

Performances: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Cinema **CONCORD** Tel: 677420

LAMBADA

Performances: 3:30, 5:00, 6:45, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema **NUJUM** Tel: 675571

TOTAL RECALL

Performances: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.
Friday & Sunday extra show at 11:00 a.m.

Cinema **PHILADELPHIA** Tel: 634144

MANIAC COP

Performances: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30

Cinema **PLAZA** Tel: 699238

Madha Kamel/ Kamal Shinnawi in **SHAWADER** (Arabic)

Performances: 12:00, 3:00, 5:15, 7:15, 9:15

Modern Fashion Design.

Located 2nd Circle,

looking for a highly qualified dressmaker with long experience in cocktail, evening and wedding dresses.

PLEASE CONTACT : 659193.

Advertisement Concerning Tender No. 1/91 - Jordanian - Syrian Land Transport Co.

Jordanian — Syrian Land Transport Co. announces extension of closing date of tender No. 1/91 to supply spare parts for its trucks to be at 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday Feb. 20th, 1991 instead of Feb 6th, 1991 due to addition of certain conditions.

Firms that purchased a copy of above tender are kindly requested to contact Josyco offices to obtain a copy of the supplement.

Hisham Asfour
Chairman / General Manager

FOR RENT

Modern Furnished Apartments

Studio - one bedroom and two bedrooms. Central heating and telephones.

Location: Jabal Amman bet. 3rd & 4th Circle.

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WANTED APARTMENT TO RENT

2 - 3 bedrooms in Abdoun, furnished to suit single European. Must have large reception area.

Long lease preferred in modern, well appointed building.

Contact telephone number 818351.

GOETHE INSTITUTE AMMAN ANNOUNCEMENT

The Goethe - Institute Amman

Regrets to announce that the lecture "Architecture-Athematic Approach"

Scheduled on Tuesday, February 5, 1991, 7:00 p.m. is postponed.

Instead, and on the same date and time we will show short documentaries about architecture and architectural environment.

De Klerk begins media campaign to sell South African reforms

CAPE TOWN (R) — President F.W. De Klerk placed full-page advertisements in newspapers Sunday urging blacks and whites to "listen to the dreams of others" and build a united post-apartheid South Africa.

The advertisements showed a soaring dove of peace and the slogan: "Politicians can work out a new South Africa, but they can't make it work — only you can do that."

The message suggested De Klerk's year-long dismantling of the 42-year-old apartheid system was complete and the time had come to decide on the type of democracy to replace it.

"For years and years we've agonized and argued about what divides us. But now it's time to think about the things that unite us," the message ran.

De Klerk won international acclaim Friday by announcing plans to repeal remaining laws upholding the system that denies majority blacks the vote and regulates daily life according to skin colour.

But his plans to scrap segregation of housing and land ownership and abandon the classification of people by race outraged white rightists and won only a cautious welcome from Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), the main anti-apartheid group, which said blacks remained voteless.

The ANC noted De Klerk's speech to parliament made no mention about speeding up the release of 3,000 political prisoners or the return of up to 30,000 political exiles.

Mandela has said he will consider suspending his reform talks with De Klerk until the exiles and prisoners are home and draconian security laws scrapped by April 1.

The government is due this week to give more details of its legislative programme and unveil the extent of the pro-reform media campaign it plans to launch around the country.

"You want justice for yourself. You want peace around you. You want prosperity for yourself and

your family," the newspaper advertisement ran.

"Now is the time to speak out loud and clear about these dreams that unite us — and more importantly to listen to the dreams of others."

Newspapers said De Klerk's latest reforms rang the death knell for punitive anti-apartheid economic sanctions and boycotts on access to world sport, arts and science.

"The battle against apartheid is over. The greater battle for a democratic South Africa has begun," said the Johannesburg Sunday Times.

(De Klerk) and his government have come to terms with apartheid's demise and are prepared for the challenge of constructing a new democratic order," said the Cape Town Argus.

De Klerk and Mandela envisage widening their reform talks to include other major black and white organisations to thrash out how to organise full negotiations on a new constitution.

De Klerk wants a constitution drafted in private round-table talks among all parties. The ANC and radical black groups disagree, saying it should be done by a popularly-elected constituent assembly.

Meanwhile right-wing whites opposing new political reforms said openly that South Africa's racial division should be strengthened, not weakened.

Without apartheid whites would be swamped by blacks, who outnumber whites by five-to-one, they said.

Right-wing leader Andries Treurnicht said De Klerk had abandoned whites to a future of black domination by planning to give blacks social and political rights.

Treurnicht and colleagues in his opposition Conservative Party (CP) stormed out of parliament in disgust Friday when De Klerk announced plans to scrap segregation of housing and land ownership and classification of the population by race.

Winnie Mandela goes on trial today

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Winnie Mandela is facing a trial that may be the greatest challenge in her turbulent life as well as a threat to the African National Congress (ANC) and South Africa's peace hopes.

Mrs. Mandela, wife of ANC leader Nelson Mandela, is to go on trial Monday in Johannesburg with several ex-bodyguards to face kidnapping and assault charges. State prosecutors allege four youths were taken to Mrs. Mandela's home and beaten in December, 1988. The youngest youth, 14-year-old Stompe Seipei, was killed.

Prosecutors said the trial may be postponed because four of Mrs. Mandela's seven co-defendants skipped bail in December. Prosecutors will make a decision Monday on whether to postpone or proceed with the trial.

Jerry Richardson, head of the disbanded bodyguards, the Mandela United Football Club, was convicted of murder in the case and is appealing a death sentence. A judge has ruled Mrs. Mandela was present during the assault, at which the youths were accused of having sex with a white Methodist minister. Seipei also was accused of being a police spy.

Salvador rebels return missiles to Nicaragua

MANAGUA (Agencies) — Salvadoran rebels returned eight Soviet-made anti-aircraft missiles Saturday from a lot of 28 obtained illegally from Nicaragua's Sandinista People's Army.

The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) rebels said 11 of the SAM-7 and SAM-14 heat-seeking missiles have been fired, presumably in their war against the U.S.-backed Salvadoran government, and that the remaining nine missiles would be returned in El Salvador later Saturday to be returned to Nicaragua.

The FMLN rebels said they would use other missiles obtained elsewhere against the U.S.-backed Salvadoran military.

The rebels were returning the Sandinista missiles apparently to avoid ruffling the feathers of Nicaragua's democratically elected government.

FMLN Commander Maria Marta Valladares told reporters at the Mexican embassy, where the eight missiles were turned in, that most of the FMLN's other missiles were U.S.-made Red-Eyes.

Ms. Valladares declined to comment on where the Red-Eyes had been obtained. But Nicaragua's Minister of the Presidency Antonio Lacayo said Friday his government was checking reports that the now-demobilised Nicaraguan contra rebels, who fought the Sandinista government during the 1980s, have sold U.S.-supplied anti-aircraft missiles to the FMLN.

Nicaragua's Sandinista military was created during the Sandinista's 11-year rule and remains the national army, even though U.S.-backed President Violeta Chamorro took office last April after beating the Sandinistas in national elections.

Ms. Valladares and three other FMLN guerrilla leaders delivered the eight missiles — four SAM-7 missiles and four SAM-14s — to the Mexican embassy here.

The eight packages were wrapped in white rubber foam sheets, bound with electrical wire and were covered by black plastic bound with masking tape and scotch tape. They were laid side by side on the cement floor next to the embassy swimming pool.

On hand to receive the weapons were officials from the Nicaraguan interior and foreign ministries, the Sandinista army and Mexican Ambassador Ricardo Galan, who was chosen as guarantor of the missile delivery. Officials from a United Nations mission to ensure compliance with a regional peace accord also were present.

1 million Sudan children born

KHARTOUM (R) — A government official said one million children were born in Sudan, where the famine is endemic.

Sudanese News Agency Sunday quoted Omar al-Bashir, head of the Department of Statistics, as saying the population of 26 million was growing at an annual rate of 1.8 per cent. The child mortality rate was 15 per cent. The life expectancy had risen to 54 years in 1988 from 54 in 1987, another census was expected.

Tay did not say when the census was carried out.

Mugger sends thank-you note to victim

BOSTON (AP) — A man wanted his victim to know he was grateful for the money he had so he sent thank-you note. The mugger's wallet was stolen two weeks ago as he was riding a subway stop in Boston. He got the wallet back in the — along with the note. "I want to thank you for the \$13 you gave me," the anonymous letter said. "I needed to get home, and I know if I had asked you for the money you would have said no, thank you." The mugger's name was inside the wallet, but a card and other belongings were missing. The mugger, 24, said he was on Jan. 20 near the House on Beacon Hill. When he realised the man was mugger, he panicked but could not catch him. He will not follow up on the case because the note made him realise how badly the man needed the money.

Vietnam willing to support France, Indonesia on Cambodia peace plan

BANGKOK (AP) — Vietnam said it is willing to back the efforts of France and Indonesia to overcome obstacles to the adoption of a draft peace plan for Cambodia, according to a joint statement Sunday.

The text of the statement, issued after two days of talks in Hanoi between senior Vietnamese, Indonesian, French and United Nations officials, was seen in Bangkok Sunday. The statement was broadcast on Vietnamese state radio Saturday.

Attending the talks were Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas, French Deputy Foreign Minister Edwige Avice, and U.N. Deputy Undersecretary General Rafeuddin Ahmad.

The French and Indonesian ministers, who co-chair the Paris international conference on Cambodia, have been trying to get the country's warring factions to agree to a draft peace agreement formulated by the U.N. Security Council.

They held talks with Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach Friday and Saturday and also met President Vo Chi Cong and Communist Party chief Nguyen Van Linh, the communi-

que said.

The peace plan was discussed "intensively and extensively," it said.

Vietnam welcomed the visiting envoys' explanations of the draft, "and asserted its readiness to support the efforts of the two co-chairmen to settle the outstanding problems," it said.

Vietnam invaded Cambodia in late 1978 and replaced the brutal Khmer Rouge government of Pol Pot with another Communist government, now headed by Premier Hun Sen. The Khmer Rouge now is the strongest part of a three-faction guerrilla coalition fighting Hun Sen's government.

The U.N. draft calls for the disarming of the factions and a major U.N. involvement in Cambodia's administration before national elections.

The guerrillas fully support the plan, but Hun Sen's government has said publicly it opposes some key elements Vietnam has backed the government's position.

In Bangkok Wednesday, Alatas said Hun Sen differed with some points of the draft but had not rejected it. Some of Hun Sen's misgivings resulted from a misinterpretation of the text, he said.

A report on Phnom Penh's official radio Saturday welcomed the discussions in Vietnam, but reiterated the government's insistence that any negotiations take into account Cambodia's sovereignty and guarantee the Pol Pot regime will not return to power.

The joint communique said the sides had agreed on the need for another meeting between the co-chairman and members of Cambodia's Supreme National Council. The Council is made up of representatives of the rival factions and was conceived under the U.N. plan.

Such a meeting would pave the way for convening a meeting of the Paris conference's Coordination Committee, the communique said. The Paris conference originally convened in late July 1989 but has been suspended due to wide differences among the Cambodians.

The envoys were to leave Vietnam Sunday for Thailand, where they planned further discussions on Cambodia. Thailand backs the guerrillas but also has mediated talks.

4 die in S. African unrest

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Police fired rubber bullets, birdshot and tear gas to disperse crowds in several incidents of violence, and a police report Sunday listed four more deaths from scattered unrest.

The unrelated incidents throughout the country involved attacks by blacks and coloureds — people of mixed-race ancestry — on local administrators considered to be collaborators with the white-led government as well as black faction fighting.

Police Capt. Henriette Bester said a town councillor in the Toekomsrus township west of Johannesburg shot one man to death when a crowd of about 120 coloured people tried to drag him from his home. She said police dispersed the crowd with tear gas, rubber bullets and shotguns firing birdshot. No injuries were reported.

In the Bekkersdal township near Johannesburg, groups of blacks armed with machetes, spears and clubs clashed Saturday, killing one man and seriously wounding two, Bester said.

She said some shots were fired and a house was set on fire. Police began foot and vehicle patrols in the township, which Bester described as tense.

Five people were injured in a grenade attack on the home of a Civic Association leader in the Tokoza township south of Johannesburg, Bester said. A 9-year-old girl sustained serious shrapnel wounds, she said, while the other four were treated for slight injuries.

The police unrest report for the previous 24 hours also said two men were killed in eastern Natal province in separate incidents. Few details were provided.

Pakistan-Afghanistan quake toll mounts as snow bars rescuers

ISLAMABAD (R) — Snow still kept rescuers away from several earthquake-stricken areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan Sunday, two days after the severe tremor that may have killed more than 400 people.

Pakistani officials confirmed 175 deaths in the country's North West Frontier Province but said the toll might exceed 200 as they awaited information from remote snow-bound villages.

Several hundred were injured and thousands of houses were destroyed or damaged, mostly in mountain villages, they added.

In neighbouring Afghanistan, officials and aid workers said about 200 people might have been killed by the early Friday quake that rocked 18 of the mountainous country's 30 provinces.

Afghan rebel sources in Pakistan reported 45 deaths in areas of six provinces controlled by Mujahideen rebels fighting to overthrow Afghan President Najibullah.

Officials in both countries said rescue teams had not yet reached some remote villages where roads and tracks were blocked by unusually heavy snowfalls this winter.

Army helicopters carried medicines and other essential supplies to far-flung areas in the three badly-hit Pakistani districts of Swat, Dir and Chitral.

The quake was measured in Pakistan at 6.8 on the Richter Scale, stronger than a 1974 tremor in the region that measured only 6.3 but killed 5,200 people.

Government officials said large-scale relief work was in progress with relief teams trying to reach all stricken areas.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has opened a relief fund with an appeal for generous donations. "It was one of the most powerful earthquakes for many years to

hit Afghanistan," Afghan Foreign Ministry spokesman M.H. Mukammel said in Kabul. "But we have no means to reach the remote areas to assess the damage and casualties."

"Reports are still coming in, and it may be many days before we know the real extent of the tragedy," he said. Many quake-hit areas were buried under deep snow, hampering rescue efforts.

Najibullah had set up a special commission to coordinate rescue and relief efforts, Mukammel said.

A number of homes and buildings collapsed in snow-covered Kabul, where officials said at least four people were killed. Long vertical cracks could be seen on the walls of many others in the city of two million people.

Aid officials said many villages in the countryside, where houses are mostly made of mud, could have been devastated.

Sinn Fein party leader dismisses truce speculation

DUBLIN (AP) — The head of the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) political wing praised the outlawed IRA Saturday and dismissed press speculation about a planned ceasefire.

"If the issues were not so serious those fictitious accounts could be ignored. Indeed they might even be a source of some amusement," Sinn Fein Party chief Gerry Adams told the 500 delegates to the annual conference of the Sinn Fein Party, the IRA's legal political branch.

Outside the central Dublin Mansion House conference hall, about 400 peace protesters urged delegates to renounce IRA violence. They included politicians from both Irish Republics, including the former Irish Prime Minister Dr. Garret Fitzgerald.

Adams applauded IRA volunteers in their campaign to drive the British out of the province of Northern Ireland and said they were struggling for Irish freedom.

At the party conference two years ago, Adams complained that IRA mistakes and killings of innocent civilians were hurting Sinn Fein, and called on the guerrillas to be "careful and care-

ful again."

Adams said Sinn Fein was always "interested and involved in seeking ways and means to bring peace out of the chaos and division created by the British occupation of part of our country."

British officials have said there will be no talks or negotiations with Sinn Fein while fighting continues.

Catholics comprise 40 per cent of the population of Northern Ireland, and Sinn Fein, which advocates a democratic socialist government of a united Ireland, receives about a third of the Catholic vote. In the Republic of Ireland, where more than 90 per cent of the population is Catholic, Sinn Fein's vote is about 2 per cent.

Sinn Fein supporters are barred from appearing on radio and television both in Ireland and Northern Ireland, and the IRA is outlawed in both.

The IRA's military campaign, supported by a minority of Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland, grew out of the Catholic civil rights protests and violent clashes of the 1960s.

Albanian opposition launches election campaign

VIENNA (R) — Albania's seven-week-old opposition party, preparing to fight the ruling Communists in elections next month, launched its campaign at the weekend with a manifesto promising privatisation and social reform.

Leaders of the Democratic Party, Albania's first opposition party in four decades of Stalinist rule, said their programme mapped out ways of introducing a market economy to Europe's poorest state.

"It's a large programme about privatisation, starting from homes, and including land reforms giving the land freely to peasants, dismantling big enterprises and then privatising them and (introducing them) to a stock market," founder member Gramoz Pashko said by telephone from Tirana Sunday.

The party also pledged to facilitate foreign investment and protect private owners by setting up a constitutional court.

The manifesto, published in the Democratic Party's newspaper Rilindja Demokratike, also offered a package of social reforms.

These included a 40-hour, five-day working week to replace the six-day week and a six-month cut in military service to 18 months with the possibility for alternative service. Maternity leave would be extended from six months to two years.

"We also include the depoliticisation of the army, police and the justice system, and freedom of travel and movement from the countryside to towns," Pashko, a university economist, said.

The Democratic Party was founded on Dec. 12 after Communist President Ramiz Alia, unravelling the isolationist cocoon woven by his predecessor Enver Hoxha, decided to allow opposition parties.

U.S. probe shows planes told to use same runway

LOS ANGELES (Agencies) — Investigators probing a crash which killed at least 19 said Saturday that a Los Angeles air traffic controller gave a Boeing 737 permission to land on Runway 24-left.

The same controller had given the Metroliner permission to be on the same runway just 70 seconds earlier, but had not given it clearance to take off, said Burnett.

The last sound on the tape was an unidentified voice saying "what the hell" Burnett told a news conference.

The controller, Burnett added, had been having "difficult communications" with an incoming Aeromexico flight at the same time. She had to repeat instructions on a number of occasions, he said.

He said the National Transportation Safety Board had requested drug and alcohol tests on all five controllers and a supervisor on duty at the time.

But authorities had so far been unable to find the woman controller, he said.

Burnett said investigators were unable to examine the wreckage or recover any more bodies Saturday because 5,000 pounds (2,272 kilograms) of fuel had to be taken off the Boeing.

He indicated the removal of the bodies, most of which are buried in the twisted remains of the two aircraft, could take days.

"We will need heavy lifting gear. It could be a tedious operation," Burnett said.

He added there was no question of the wreckage being examined until all the bodies were removed. "We don't ask our peo-

ple to work among or climb over the remains," he said.

In addition to six bodies visible in the Boeing, the plane's captain, Colin Shaw, 48, died in hospital Saturday and the 10 passengers and crew of two in the Metroliner were all killed.

There were 64 survivors on the Boeing and 18 were still unaccounted for in that plane, officials said.

The collision was the worst Los Angeles International Airport accident since 1969.

All 38 people aboard a United Airlines Boeing 737 were killed 22 years ago. Five days earlier, on Jan. 13, 1969, a Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS) DC-8 plunged into the sea eight miles (13 kilometres) from the airport, killing 45 people.

The deaths in the SAS crash were the first involving a commercial airline since the airport opened in 1947.

No one had died in a commercial jet crash at the Los Angeles airport, one of the nation's busiest, since a Honolulu-bound Continental Airlines DC-10 blew two tyres and crashed after an aborted takeoff in 1978. Three people were killed.

Increases in air traffic over the Los Angeles basin prompted the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to promise a new radar control system in 1995 to help ease congestion.

Last April, the Airline Pilots Association charged that the sky over the airport was among the seven most dangerous flight areas in the United States.

In one of the worst Los

Angeles accidents, an Aeromexico DC-9 approaching the airport collided in flight with a small plane over suburban Cerritos in August 1968. Eighty-two people were killed.

A jury in 1989 divided blame for the Cerritos crash equally between the United States as regulator of the air space and the pilot of the small plane. Jurors found an air traffic controller failed to warn the pilots they were on a collision course.

The Cerritos accident and a series of close calls in 1987 prompted investigations and the closing of an air corridor for small planes near the airport. The corridor has since been reopened.

A report by the General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress, showed that the airport had 57 near-collisions involving airlines between 1986 and 1988. That's nearly twice as many as airports in New York, Chicago and San Francisco, said the report, released in 1989.

Air traffic controllers complained as recently as last year that the FAA's computer system suddenly drops vital information from their screens, including altitude and flight number data.

The FAA instituted changes designed to make the skies over the Los Angeles basin safer, including simplified flight rule charts and pilot education.

In 1989, pilots reports the number of near-collisions dropped 47 per cent from the previous year. For the first 10 months of 1989, the number of near-collisions reports declined from 36 to 19, the FAA said.

Antarctica has changed since a continuous sheet crept over the continent million years ago, covering 97 per cent of its surface and obliterating most native life. It suggests the world warmed again between three and three million years ago, pushing back the ice sheet and allowing forests to grow. Antarctica about the size of the United States and Canada combined. "It looks as if the leaves fell where they were found, probably into a river or a quiet stream backwater, then were quickly covered,"

professor David Harwood of the University of Nebraska in the U.S. said in a statement released here. "It seems very possible the warming and subsequent ice occurred on a global scale."

Antarctica has probably looked much like it does today, with large ice areas and passing glaciers. Harwood said. Ice probably covered only half or one third of continent then, he said.

Forests once flourished in Antarctica

SYDNEY (R) — Fossils found in an icy mountain range near the South Pole indicate the world was warmer three million years ago and Antarctica was partly covered with temperate forests, scientists said Friday.

The fossils of leaves found on the bleak Beardmore Glacier some 400 kilometres from the south pole, indicate forests of beech trees once flourished on the continent. "This really is astounding," geologist Barrie McKelvey of Australia's University of Melbourne said. "It indicates a major warming of the world then and that (Antarctica) was some 20 to 25 degrees Celsius (59 to 77 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than now."

The fossils from deciduous southern beech were found 10 metres above sea level on December last year. The discovery challenges current theory that Antarctica has changed since a continuous sheet crept over the continent million years ago, covering 97 per cent of its surface and obliterating most native life. It suggests the world warmed again between three and three million years ago, pushing back the ice sheet and allowing forests to grow. Antarctica about the size of the United States and Canada combined. "It looks as if the leaves fell where they were found, probably into a river or a quiet stream backwater, then were quickly covered,"

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